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ABSTRACT

This summary report of the First Regional Conference brings together comments and discussions of a wide cross-section of interests in consumer education, and will be useful to teachers, curriculum developers, and school administrators alike. Contents include: (1) Consumer Education, A Step in Revitalizing the Curriculum by Gordon Van Hooft; (2) An Inside Look at the Function of the Attorney General's Office with Respect to Consumer Protection and Education by Louis J. Lefkowitz; (3) The Consumer and Congress by Richard L. Ottinger. Included are remarks by Betty Furness and David Schoenfeld. Panel members' remarks cover a wide spectrum of considerations in developing a consumer education program. The sessicns of five groups are also reported: social studies, business education, hcme economics, health, mathematics, science, English, and continuing education. (JLB)

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Proceedings of the
FIRST REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONSUMER EDUCATION

THE NEW APPROACH TO CONSUMER EDUCATION

The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department
Curriculum Development Center
Albany, New York 12224

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Proceedings of the First Regional Conference on Consumer Education

The New Approach to Consumer Education

Lincoln High School, Yonkers, New York
March 15, 1968

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PREFACE

The State Education Department is pleased to forward to school administrators copies of the Proceedings of the First Regional Conference on Consumer Education. We feel this material is important for the following reasons:

- There is growing interest and concern for curriculum materials which have relevancy and meaning to students. We believe that Consumer Education meets such a need.

- The statements of the leaders in this field on the national and state level serve to underline the urgency of such instruction and the direction it should take.

- The comments of the panel members indicate how Consumer Education encompasses many disciplines and lends itself to a school wide disciplinary approach.

- The summary comments of the afternoon sessions are filled with practical suggestions of how schools may effectively implement Consumer Education.

I urge each administrator to consider with his staff how Consumer Education may best be introduced or strengthened in his school district.

As indicated this is a summary report of the First Regional Conference. While it is unlikely that speakers of the national stature of those who appeared at the First Conference would again be available in New York State, further conferences may be scheduled if there is sufficient interest. Let us know if you would like one in your area.

The Center for Economic Education of the State University of New York at Albany is cooperating by developing Teaching Aids correlated with the State Consumer Education syllabus. Members of the committee are preparing supplementary guides for each of the 12 units in the State course. These teachers, who represent a cross. section from each of the disciplines of Social Studies, Business Education, and Home Economics, have also volunteered to serve as consultants and speakers for schools wishing to introduce Consumer Education.

Please let us know how the State Education Department can further help you in this matter.

Walter Crewson

WALTER CREWSON
Associate Commissioner for Elementary, Secondary and Continuing Education

CONTENTS

Page

Greetings—Arthur Natella, Principal, Lincoln High School..... 1

Consumer Education, A Step in Revitalizing the Curriculum
Gordon E. Van Hooft, Chief, Bureau of Secondary Curriculum Development, State Education Department..... 4

An Inside Look at the Function of the Attorney General's Office With Respect to Consumer Protection and Education
Hon. Louis J. Lefkowitz, Attorney General of the State of New York..... 11

The Consumer and Congress
Hon. Richard L. Ottinger, Member of Congress from the 25th District..... 18

Address
Miss Betty Furness, Special Assistant to the President for Consumer Affairs..... 23

Remarks
David Schoenfeld, Director for Consumer Education, President's Committee on Consumer Interests..... 29

Comments by Panel Members

Moderator—Hillis Idleman, Associate, Bureau of Secondary Curriculum Development, State Education Department..... 34

Herbert Bothamley, Chief, Bureau of Continuing Education Curriculum Development, State Education Department..... 35

Miss Laura Ehman, Chief, Bureau of Home Economics Education, State Education Department..... 37

Mrs. Betty Larsen, Assistant, Bureau of Social Studies Education, State Education Department..... 40

Arthur Natella, Principal, Lincoln High School..... 42

John Whitcraft, Director, Division of Occupational Education, State Education Department..... 43

Reports of Group Sessions

Group A — Social Studies..... 46

Group B — Business Education..... 48

Group C — Home Economics..... 54

Group D — Health, Mathematics, Science, English, and Other Secondary Areas..... 55

Group E — Continuing Education..... 57

Greetings
Arthur A. Natella

It is a distinct privilege and a rare pleasure to extend to you a cordial welcome on the occasion of this FIRST REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON CONSUMER EDUCATION. I am confident that today's program, with its focus on the NEW APPROACH TO CONSUMER EDUCATION, will prove to be stimulating and provocative-productive of clear cut guidelines useful for those here in attendance who may be considering embarking upon school programs in this vital area.

When I first learned of the State Education's desire to hold the conference at our school, my quick reaction was: this is like bringing coals to Newcastle--Lincoln High School cannot qualify as a school in need of conversion to the cause. But to become serious for a moment; my colleagues and I were delighted to open our doors to permit you to hear the distinguished speakers who will soon address us and to share in the planning of this afternoon's educational sessions.

Some six years ago, we decided to reverse a trend that irritated some of us, at least--I refer to the sad fact that the development of consumer education, or call it economic citizenship, if you prefer, has not received from school personnel the emphasis that its importance merits. We felt so strongly that consumer education must become an integral part of the training we offer to young people, that we undertook to draw up a course of study to provide meaningful, practical training so that our boys and girls would receive help in making informed decisions. Consider these facts, please: We are all consumers, and we comprise the largest group in our country's economy. Also, two-thirds or more of all money spent comes from our pockets. And yet as consumers we act in a kind of vacuum because our choices when we go out into the open market are not based on rational information. The average consumer is overwhelmed by the complexity of the market--he simply is not trained to cope with it. Interestingly enough, ignorance of the marketplace is not confined to any one group in today's society. We are not speaking of the poor, the deprived or the immigrants. Lawyers, teachers, physicians, engineers and businessmen who consider themselves to be rather sharp have been and are "being taken" with monotonous regularity despite their high level of education.

Now you may be wondering what all this has to do with the topic. Here's the key, ladies and gentlemen: The education represented by our profession, and the professions just mentioned, has rarely included training for the art of everyday economic living.

Education in America appears to have concentrated upon two areas: (1) the so-called producer-type education which has stressed the acquisition of skills that are needed for an individual who would eventually become a producer; and (2) cultural education emphasizing the development of an appreciation of the many arts which tend to enrich our lives. Both are vital, one from the point of earning one's living, and the other, because it enables us to reap the benefits of a life which takes full advantage of leisure time. But there is a third area that has been neglected to date. This is consumer education--education for the preparation of an individual's life as a consumer. So it follows then, that

education is accomplishing only part of the job. We teach a person how to earn his livelihood, but we fall short of showing him how best to utilize his income when he goes to spend or save it.

Consumer education is vital not only for the individual, but for the economy as a whole. If we are to enjoy an economy in which the consumer rates a place, at least on a par with the producer, he should have the capability of acting with intelligence so that he casts his economic vote for those producers who can best satisfy his wants and needs.

It should be emphasized that consumer education does not have as its purpose that of directing consumer choices. Purely and simply, it boils down to exposing the consumer to all the possible alternatives and opportunities. Then the individual consumer can rightfully be expected to assume full responsibility for making his decision on the basis of his needs, and the product or service that will best meet those needs. Consumer education tells the consumer what the alternatives are and how he can make an intelligent choice. Its responsibilities end there.

Many of you present at today's conference may well be thinking: Are there new goals for consumer education as a result of the rapid social and economic changes that have emerged since the Depression period?

I would first say "No"; then I would qualify that by saying that the kind of program that needs to be offered to really do the required job should be given a NEW LOOK. A meaningful, effective program of consumer education should emphasize not one purpose, but many. It must not be a recitation of the do's and don'ts of shopping; nor should it be a watered-down version of a traditional basic economics course with a generous sprinkling of catch phrases and cliches referring to consumer problems. (Incidentally, that's the most effective way to sabotage a program of consumer education.) No, consumer education is neither the one nor the other.

A sensible educational program designed for young people of junior and senior high school age or older people who may be attending evening or extension division courses on the secondary or college level, should focus upon providing opportunities for learning ways to get more and better satisfaction for the time, energy and money that we have at our disposal. Whether the program takes the form of a full year course, a one semester pattern or is also integrated into other subject areas such as home economics, social studies, business education, science, industrial arts and others--as we have done here at Lincoln--the essential goals should be the same. They must include these aims:

1. Every individual should be taught how to make intelligent choices.
2. Everyone should develop the art of becoming a skilled buyer.
3. Each of us should learn how to manage his personal financial affairs.
4. Every person should learn the importance of becoming an efficient user of goods and services.
5. As consumers we should be made aware of our social and economic responsibilities.

Consumer education has no ax to grind, though there are those who believe otherwise. Certainly it favors the consumer, why shouldn't it? Every segment of society has organized groups with vested interests. Up to now the American consumer has not had any strong, organized group to speak for him. And there's a very simple reason for this sad state of affairs. There's a prevalent notion that it is easy to spend money--you don't have to learn how. But the difficult task is to earn it and save it. People don't realize that production and consumption are complementary.

A good, positive approach to consumer training is to emphasize the importance of developing a thoroughly practical viewpoint--strive to get maximum value at the minimum cost; recognize that every seller must make a legitimate profit.

Here's another thought--consumer education at the hands of industry and advertising is certainly no innovation in this country. Professor Colston Warne, President of Consumers Union, pointed out recently that for years our youth have been enrolled almost at birth in the informal consumer education course provided by advertising.

Fortified by the Brand Names Foundation, by advertising federations, and by trade association promotion, ever-mounting attention has been paid to the conditioning of youth to act in ways profitable to advertisers. As the Senior Editor and Public Relations Director of Seventeen, "America's Teenage Magazine" recently put it:

> You don't have to catch them one by one--you can catch thousands with one well-thought-out advertising campaign backed up by school promotion...,
>
> Catch a teen-age girl and put her in your pocket now and you'll keep her forever. Now's the time to sew her up--before the rice is in her hair, before the stork is on the roof, before the wolf is at the door. Set her textured stockings on the path to your product now--and she'll come back blindfolded, baby-strollered and one day bifocaled....
>
> Teen girls spend 4.6 billion dollars annually on apparel and footwear, accounting for 22 percent of the nation's total women's apparel expenditures, yet representing only 12 percent of the nation's total female population. Clothes and cosmetics are the most important products in their lives as these young women work to prove that life can be beautiful. They spend 490 million dollars annually on cosmetics and toiletries....
>
> Need we say any more?

Consumer Education, A Step in Revitalizing the Curriculum
Gordon E. Van Hooft

As it often happens with many of you who have planned a meeting, I find myself cast into a role that I had hoped would be handled by someone higher on the totem pole in the State Education Department. But things are getting more and more "Rocky" in Albany as the drama unfolds. Most of the top brass in the Department are engaged in solving a type of problem common to the most lowly consumer, namely, how to do more with less money.

It is my pleasure to welcome all of you here on the part of Commissioner Allen and the many units of the State Education Department who are cooperating with the Curriculum Development Center in conducting this conference. I am most pleased to welcome the distinguished speakers who will address you after I finish. Their willingness to participate reflects the high value they place on the problems faced by consumers and their faith in the role of education in this vital area of universal concern.

I must also express appreciation to Superintendent Wynstra and Arthur Natella who have cooperated so much in providing the facilities and handling the other details that go along with being a host to such a meeting. It seemed particularly appropriate to hold the first regional conference in this school where so much has been done in recent years under the leadership of Mr. Natella and Dave Schoenfeld to spark a resurgence of interest in consumer education. We are especially gratified to see that Mr. Schoenfeld is spreading the gospel at the national level in his new role as Director for Consumer Education for the Presidents' Committee on Consumer Interests.

We are pleased not only with the response to our invitation to educators who usually feel obligated to show up at a State-called conference but also with the turnout of representatives from business and industry as well as those of you who are here on as consumers. I shall try to avoid educational gobbledygook and talk with you for a few minutes in basic English about some of the opportunities we see for improving the educational experience for all children, and, indeed, for many adults as well.

Many of us have felt for some time that our schools are not turning out very good "choosers." All of us must make choices in many areas of our daily life. We see evidence all about us of poor decisionmaking on the part of children and adults, both as individuals and in groups, both in run-of-the-mill daily problem solving and in major actions at the State and national levels. Certainly, these choices involve not only economic factors but often also social, political, health, esthetic, ethical, moral, and religious values as well. We expect that schools and other agencies will provide the facts that are needed to help us reach a decision. Often, however, we find that we need to make choices on the basis of value judgments. It is here that I see the basis for "The New Approach to Consumer Education" which is the theme for this conference.

Let me at this point emphasize that consumer education does not have as its purpose that of directing consumer choices. Rather it offers the

exposure to many alternatives and opportunities and helps the consumer to make that choice which is best for him in terms of his values.

Neither is it the function of consumer education to indoctrinate values. Although I firmly believe that there would be a much greater consensus on basic values than is commonly ascribed to our multiracial, multiethnic American society, if people would only take the time to identify the values they hold in common, I do not think we can get very far by dictating choices for consumers or for any other aspect of our daily living. It is the function of consumer education to provide the experiences that will permit children to engage in the process of weighing the pros and cons to arrive at a decision. Along the way there will be many opportunities to stimulate thought about what it means to make a life as well as to make a living. It may well happen that in the process of arriving at a decision about purchasing a car, for example, that one sets for himself the place that the car will have in his life.

In all areas of the curriculum we are stressing more than facts to be memorized, to be regurgitated in class or recalled on a test and then almost immediately forgotten. All of you have been through the hoops, and you remember those teachers who made you <u>feel</u> involved in what you were learning. Those teachers who raised the questions of "how" and "why" stimulated you to do some thinking for yourself and in the process you did a lot of learning.

Youth of today are seeking answers - perhaps no more so than we of the past generation. But they are searching in a most complex world in which some long-held values are being questioned. In increasing voice the plea is heard to relate education to the realities of the pupil's daily life - to help him find answers to the real problems he faces. In short, the cry is to make the school curriculum more "relevant." What are young people trying to tell us? Are they saying that the experiences they get in our egg-crate schools as they pass from compartment to compartment - both physically and mentally - that these experiences and the subject matter does not contain a message for them? It is all too apparent that they are telling us quite clearly that much of the school program does not make sense to them.

It must be said immediately that these youths are not only those we call "disadvantaged." The cry for relevance is being raised by youth in the affluent suburb as well as in the ghetto, and the problems that exist in both places demand new solutions. But it is equally apparent that the so-called disadvantaged children suffer more from the deficiencies of our programs. We must keep in mind particularly what especially appropriate solutions consumer education offers to some of the curriculum problems we face with the disadvantaged. There is also a growing conclusion from the evidence at hand that what proves beneficial for the disadvantaged also proves to be an improvement for all children. With these factors in mind, just what are the features of consumer education that offer promise for reaching all kinds of young people with something both of intrinsic value and as a key to many doors?

There is no problem more real to the individual than that of achieving maximum values and satisfactions from his disposable income. This is

commonly referred to as "buymanship." It relates to such personal things as wants and preferences which cannot be taught by dictating what "ought to" be wanted. It is necessary that a pupil be provided the opportunity to figure out his needs, seek out the facts and figures, organize this information for analysis, and arrive at a decision. In general, these steps are the same as those used by the natural or social scientist but often there is a value dimension that enters the picture to complicate the choice-making. After a number of experiences with such real problems, the person gets the general idea of the process of decisionmaking. Thus the teacher is really helping the students develop a general method for choosing or buying anything. In the process several basic skills can be taught or reinforced and there is motivation that can be capitalized on to stimulate related learnings.

Another very real problem relates to "money management." Here again it should be more than teaching the mere mechanics of budgeting. There is the opportunity for building a method for deciding on one's values and priorities to use one's money to buy the kind of life one wants. An adolescent needs to set standards for himself that he can work for - not to buy less and not satisfy his desires, but to enable him to obtain more of the things he feels necessary for a good life. In the process he finds out about the need to defer some things in order to eventually satisfy more important wants. In sum, the aim is to improve his choice-making process and improve the quality of his wanting.

So far I have talked in somewhat general terms about consumer education as one way to make the curriculum more relevant. I do not pretend that it is a panacea to solve all problems for all children. We are expecting to strengthen the total curriculum by requiring more and better health education and citizenship education, and putting more stress on the humanities. All of these have dimensions of value education that are obvious, and I want to stress the importance we attach to all of these areas. I am not minimizing the importance of maintaining a quality instructional program in the academic areas or strengthening programs of occupational education. I am pleading for consumer education as an avenue to learning for many students as well for its inherent value for all citizens.

Now I want to review briefly where we were at the State level, what we did and how we did it, and what we have to show for our efforts.

It is unfair to say that schools have completely neglected consumer education. Some of us remember the first surge of interest and the programs that developed about 25 years ago. We recall that some of the emphases of the depression-spawned programs did not go over very big with some segments of business and advertising. In the intervening years there has been a great deal of consumer education taught by teachers of home economics, business education, social studies, economics, health, industrial arts, and here and there throughout the program. Some students have had very fine experiences, but the fact remains that what is everybody's business seldom gets adequately done. There have been large gaps in the program for all students and deficiencies that were apparent - both for the disadvantaged and for the advantaged.

We do feel that some consumer education as appropriate should remain as an integral part of all of the areas mentioned earlier. No home economics or business education teacher should fail to include basic content and experiences from this area. While we do have basic economic understandings throughout the new kindergarten - high school social studies program, there is no strong focus on consumer problems in most classrooms.

In 1966, after a series of conferences with Attorney General Louis Lefkowitz, we made a commitment to prepare curriculum materials for both high school and adult programs. The Attorney General was pleading for consumer education as the foundation for consumer protection. Our high school advisory committee recommended a broad-scale approach and the development of materials for an elective course. At the adult level filmstrips, flipcharts, teacher's manuals and student worksheets have been prepared for use in the adult basic education program.

In the process of preparing these materials, we sought advice and help from many sources: U.S. government agencies such as the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce, Federal Trade Commission, Food and Drug Administration, etc.; State agencies such as the Departments of Law, Agriculture and Markets, Commerce, and Social Welfare; New York City agencies; Consumers Research; Consumers Union; Better Business Bureau; and many other agencies related to banking, insurance, economic education, and the like. We received help also from centers at the University of Florida and University of Wisconsin. Anywhere we turned we found a ready source of help and encouragement. As a result, we have developed materials that have been universally well received and have drawn high compliments. In fact, no material that we have turned out from my Bureau in recent years had the rave notices that our Consumer Education course has brought.

What do we recommend to schools? We first of all want all teachers who are teaching consumer education in their courses to strengthen their existing teaching by making use of the new resource material. Then, we are recommending that schools add a separate consumer education course in grade 12, particularly for the general student who may not elect the 12th grade advanced economics course. In fact, a project of the State Council on Economic Education is focused on the identification of the economic understandings that are included in our consumer education course. This project will help teachers achieve as high goals of economic literacy as the students can achieve.

Specifically, what's in the course? First of all, it's flexible. We can suggest seven basic units for all students:

-- General Principles of Consumer Purchasing

-- Purchasing Food, Clothing, Furniture, and Appliances

-- Purchasing and Maintaining an Automobile

-- Housing: Apartment Rental and Purchasing a Home

-- Short Term Consumer Credit

-- Budgeting and Money Management

-- Fraud, Quackery, and Deception

In addition, five more units are included to meet special interests and needs:

-- Banking and Savings

-- Investments

-- Life and Health Insurance

-- Security Programs: Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid

-- Consumer Law

The material is organized so as to provide the teacher with ideas for appropriate activities and sources of information such as books, pamphlets, films, filmstrips, etc. It is not a prescribed course of study, but rather one that is flexible and can be geared to the needs of individuals. It is primarily experience-based, oriented to immediate goals, and geared to social participation. In short, it satisfies many of the criteria for a curriculum that can be effective with all students.

Let me quote from the Introduction to the unit on Consumer Credit to give you some flavor of the philosophy behind the consumer education course.

"The use of consumer credit has been an important factor in the growth of the American economy. It has contributed to the increased capability of consumers to demand and obtain without delay a variety of goods and services. Although credit does permit more immediate satisfaction of needs and desires, it does not increase total purchasing power. Thus, the standard of living is raised, but at the expense of the assumption of debt. Credit has helped many individuals and families to buy and furnish homes, obtain automobiles, and take care of many of the financial problems that confront them. On the other hand, when credit has been used indiscriminately and without understanding, it has resulted in financial loss, family discord and concern, and decline in the level of living.

"The use of consumer credit—and the ability to borrow—have expanded very rapidly in the post-World War II period. People are buying a variety of items on credit and increasing personal debt to an extent never before known. The prices of such items as television sets, washing machines, automobiles, motor boats, and trailers do not permit the average citizen to buy them from his available cash. But some people want the satisfaction of owning such items even though they may not have the ready cash. For them, credit becomes the answer. As a result, the volume of consumer debt (outstanding consumer credit) has assumed vast proportions. The Federal Reserve Board release of January 1967, indicates that installment credit outstanding totals $74 billion. Total consumer credit outstanding, installment credit, charge accounts, and noninstallment credit amounts to $93.5 billion. It is estimated that approximately two out of every three

American families have some outstanding debt. Even more pertinent is the fact that four out of every five newly-married couples will make repeated use of credit to obtain the goods and services that they desire. At the same time a more sobering fact is that most of the families who assume credit obligations have little or no ready cash to meet financial emergencies. The number of personal bankruptcies is on the increase; the present rate is higher than that which prevailed during the height of the depression of the 1930's. In view of the relative affluence of the present period, the large number of bankruptcies indicates widespread misuse of credit. The assumption of only that debt that is within reason (within one's financial capability to repay) can be a positive force. Concern develops when credit is used to achieve immediate objectives without regard for the consequences.

Outcomes - Help each student to:

- Develop understanding of the proper uses of credit
- Recognize the dangers of credit
- Learn that credit permits people to "buy now and pay later"
- Understand that the wise use of credit stimulates the manufacture of goods, helps families acquire assets, and raises the general level of living.

Summary

> Credit is a valuable tool in the hands of the consumer who is able to control it and use it prudently. Credit employed wisely can benefit not only the individual consumer, but the producer and the entire economy as well."

As you can tell, we have tried to maintain perspective and reflect the balanced point of view to which we, as educators, must be committed. We are well aware that consumer protection is needed to protect against the shady operator, but we know that the vast majority of salesmen and other businessmen are hurt by gyps and rackets and are anxious to expose them. We know that laws are needed to protect consumers, but we feel that these are ineffectual without adequate education programs. We also know that consumers, too, are not without fault. Among the dishonest consumers are those who order by mail with no intention of paying, those who buy articles abroad at a discount and turn them in for full credit at American stores, and those who return merchandise "when the party is over." Such people help to raise the costs of goods to the merchant and the public. We will hear more about governmental action on behalf of the consumer from the next three speakers.

Let me close with a quotation from President Kennedy, "If consumers are offered inferior products, if prices are exorbitant, if drugs are unsafe or worthless, if the consumer is unable to choose on an informed basis, then his dollar is wasted, his health and safety may be threatened,

and the national interest suffers. On the other hand, increased efforts to make the best possible use of their incomes can contribute more to the well-being of most families than equivalent efforts to raise their incomes."

Yes, we do feel that consumer education is one step in revitalizing the curriculum. We do see the need for more and better consumer education at all levels. We feel that we have made a start. It is now up to administrators and teachers to strengthen existing programs and initiate new ones. But it will be up to the public to provide the needed support for this type of offering in the curriculum. We do hope that the result will contribute to a better informed citizenry and consumers who are able to operate effectively and wisely in the marketplace.

An Inside Look at the Function of the Attorney General's Office With Respect to Consumer Protection and Education

Hon. Louis J. Lefkowitz

It is a privilege and a pleasure to appear at this first regional conference on consumer education and to be given the opportunity to discuss the work of my office in the field of consumer protection and education.

By way of introduction, I think that I should observe that this State pioneered in this field 11 years ago when the first Bureau of Consumer Frauds and Protection in any state or in any governmental agency was established by me in the Department of Law.

Since that time this bureau has served as a model for the creation of similar agencies by 20 states as well as by local governments. I believe it is fair to say that its effectiveness in serving the people is apparent in the fact that in a single year we have processed complaints and inquiries from more than 100,000 residents of this State. It is appropriate indeed that your first regional conference is being conducted at Lincoln High School in Yonkers where one of the first consumer education programs in a public school was initiated. This was accomplished through the inspiration and efforts of principal Arthur Natella and his colleague David Schoenfeld who is now Director for Consumer Education for the President's Committee on Consumer Interests.

Consumer education is just as important as consumer protection; some may feel that it is more important. For an alert and informed consumer is the best deterrent against fraud and deception.

I was pleased to learn that the recently approved course in consumer education has been introduced in many elementary and high schools.

The course has been prepared by the State Education Department for use in all secondary schools in the State as an elective one. I urge that the State Department of Education consider my proposal that the course be one which is mandatory for all students, preferably in their senior year. In my opinion, it is not possible to provide "too much" education for our young people who will be the homemakers and breadwinners shortly after graduation from high school or college.

It should be stressed that consumer education must not be antibusiness oriented. The function of such education is not to make our children wary of all businessmen. Rather we should seek a positive approach. We should provide the students with the tools they need to enable them to go out into the world as alert consumers. Both business and government should be called upon to provide expert advice and assistance in the creation of course material and for participation in the course itself.

The complexities of the marketplace today are such as to confuse even the most astute consumer who must decide which product claims he should accept and which he should ignore. The constant din of hucksters bewilders even the adult buyer when he must decide which brand of gasoline, cigarettes,

soft drink, soap or detergent is the best from the standpoint of economy and quality.

By way of beginning, it should be restated that you and I, the Governor and the New York State Legislature are severally committed to promote consumer protection. Governor Rockefeller in his recent message to the Legislature stated:

"Consumers deserve increased government protection from the unscrupulous few who cheat the public and prey with special cruelty on the poor."

A new consciousness of the plight of the consumer has enveloped the entire nation.

The Bureau of Consumer Frauds and Protection in my office has recently celebrated its eleventh full year of service to the consumers of the State. Since then much has happened in the field of consumer protection. Then, many questioned whether it was the legitimate function of State government to involve itself in the marketplace relations of buyer and seller. Of course, it was recognized that the State had a traditional role in certain limited areas of the marketplace such as the regulation of weights and measures and the protection of food. But, should the State become directly involved in buyer-seller dealings which until then were handled in the courts when disputes arose? And, should the concept of "caveat emptor" which for so long had served as the cornerstone of commercial relationships be reexamined and perhaps changed?

Today, these questions seem largely academic. On every level of government - federal, state and local - there is intense interest and activity in consumer protection.

The delegates at the recent Constitutional Convention in this State proposed in the Bill of Rights section a consumer article:

> Sec. 12. The protection and education of the people of the state against unfair, inequitable or dishonest sales, marketing and financing practices are and shall continue to be state concerns. Any person who purchases goods or service in this state shall be fully informed in a reasonable manner of the precise quantity, the total purchase price including all credit, service or other fees, and all other material conditions of such sale. The legislature shall provide for the implementation of this section.

Caveat emptor is slowly but surely changing as the rule of commerce and a new concept, "Let the seller make full disclosure," is beginning to take its place.

The Bureau of Consumer Frauds and Protection was created because of my abiding faith in the proposition that a consumer has a right to fair dealing. The overwhelming number of businessmen in our State also subscribe to this proposition. However, there exists a small but fringe element of merchants who make their living by preying on the consumer. Most often this minority directs its efforts to defrauding the poor in the community. The poor are most vulnerable to a fraudulent sales practice

because they possess very little marketing sophistication to detect it or the know-how to seek out help when it has occurred.

The greatest number of complaints received by my office involve abuses arising out of credit sales. As professor David Caplovitz suggested in his fine study, entitled "The Poor Pay More," the combination of socially supported wants for goods, the unavailability of cash to purchase them, poor credit rating and lack of marketing know-how all add up to make the poor consumer easy prey to the unscrupulous credit merchant.

Abuses are legion! Some of the most common include: The sale of shoddy merchandise such as furniture and other household appliances at unconscionable markups and the refusal to render repair services after the sale: The bait advertisement, such as the familiar, "3 rooms of furniture" or "3 rooms of carpet" or the "zigzag sewing machine for an unbelievable low price and no money down" designed solely as a come-on to get the consumer into the store and switch him to higher priced merchandise.

Other common abuses include the door-to-door sale of a set of encyclopedias, often outdated and of poor quality, on the misrepresentation that the salesman has been sent from a local school; or the door-to-door sale of a so-called food-freezer plan under the guise that the family will save on food bills. In reality, the family winds up paying double or triple the retail value of a freezer and receives an inadequate and low grade supply of food; the sale of used or old model merchandise as brand new.

My office has instituted a four-pronged approach to consumer protection (1) mediation, (2) enforcement, (3) legislation and (4) education.

In creating the Bureau, I sought to provide the consumer with a place to come for immediate assistance with his particular buying problem. Easy accessibility by the consumer has been the keystone of the bureau with red tape cut to the minimum. A consumer can come to the complaint room without prior appointment, fill out a simplified complaint form and see a staff member, some of whom are fluent in Spanish.

Very often the staff member can resolve the problem by a phone call to the merchant while the consumer is still at his desk. If the problem cannot be solved immediately, it is followed up and the consumer can get an answer usually within 14 days of filing his complaint.

If the consumer is unable to come to our office, he can file his complaint by letter.

I am extremely proud of the results of the mediation efforts. In 1959, the Bureau opened files on 5,000 consumer complaints while in 1966 the figure rose to 14,000. In 1966 and 1967, the Bureau succeeded in obtaining over one million dollars in restitution for aggrieved consumers.

Where the level of complaints received against a particular merchant indicates that he may be engaged in a pattern of fraudulent business conduct, our second approach comes into play - namely, the enforcement function of the Bureau.

The weapons used to prosecute consumer frauds by our office are primarily civil in nature. By far, most of the Bureau's actions have been brought under a provision in the executive law which permits the bureau to seek injunctive relief in court on five days notice to the alleged offender. Before the court can grant an injunction, the State must establish that the offender has engaged in persistent and repeated fraudulent or illegal conduct. The statute was recently amended so as to provide a very liberal definition of the word "fraud." Thus, fraud is defined to include, "any device, scheme or artifice to defraud and any deception, misrepresentation, concealment, suppression, false pretense, false promise or unconscionable contractual provisions."

The last reference contained in the definition namely, *unconscionable contractual provisions* is unique in State consumer protection legislation. It enables the Bureau to seek injunctive relief in cases where it believes unconscionability exists.

The chief merit of the executive law provision is speed. My office can be in court on five days notice and even less when circumstances require by obtaining a court order. Speed is the key to any successful action against consumer fraud. Indeed, unless we can catch the offender in the act so to speak and stop him quickly, the chances are good that the damage caused will be irreparable before action is completed.

Closely related to the executive law provision is a provision in New York's business corporation law which permits the attorney general to seek the dissolution of a domestic corporation which is engaged in persistent fraud or illegality. If circumstances require, we can seek the appointment of a receiver to preserve and protect the corporate assets.

Other consumer protection legislation has been enacted. For example, we have the right to seek injunctive relief against the bait advertiser and against the sender of unsolicited merchandise. We also have the right to seek injunctive relief against the merchant who sells used, repossessed or reconditioned television sets or other major household appliances without disclosing this fact by appropriate label on the merchandise and statement in advertising.

Recently, we were given statutory authority to seek a civil penalty in the amount of five hundred dollars for false advertising. The statute expressly makes an advertiser's compliance with the Federal Trade Commission Act a complete defense to any action. This provision is salutary since it promotes a uniform application of state and federal law in this area.

A unique approach in dealing with industry-wise practices has been developed by the Bureau. We have formulated voluntary codes of ethical conduct in conjunction with the industry involved. Most recently, such a code has been established for the hearing aid dealers in the State.

We had received a disturbing number of complaints against hearing aid dealers. Representatives of the dealers were invited to our office to discuss a solution and it was decided to jointly draft a code of ethics. The code, which has already been signed by a majority of dealers in the State has significantly reduced the number of complaints received by us.

The code covers such items as bait, price and guarantee advertising; misrepresentation as to the nature of the business; use of scare tactics; testimonials, contests; and the form and content of contracts.

Still another area of our activity is the holding of public conferences for the purpose of focusing the attention of the consumer on important topics of concern to them and exploring where appropriate the possibilities of legislation. Interested parties on all sides of an issue are invited to attend and participate. One recent conference, for example, explored the area of the need for truth in lending legislation on the state level; another conference explored collection practices employed in installment contract defaults. Both of these conferences resulted in recommendations for proposed legislation now pending before our legislature.

The third approach to consumer protection is through the annual legislative program of the office. Each year we recommend the passage of bills affecting the consumer's interests. This year we have recommended and supported a package of consumer credit bills.

Foremost among these, is a bill recommended by Governor Rockefeller which I strongly support. It would require a retail merchant to disclose to the installment buyer the actual cost of credit including a statement of the annual percentage interest rate.

At present, the New York Retail Installment Sales Act and the Motor Vehicle Instalment Sales Act require the disclosure of finance charges and other fees only in terms of dollar amount. Neither statute requires a statement of the true annual interest rate. Ours is a debt economy - today consumers owe $75 billion in installment credit debts and pay $13 billion a year in finance charges on these debts. During the past decade consumer debts (excluding home mortgages) have almost trebled. Many merchants find it more profitable to sell credit than to sell merchandise. There can be no doubt that as a nation we are firmly committed to a buy now, pay later economy.

It is likewise true that the basis of our free enterprise system is that informed sellers and buyers deal with each other on a rational basis. Where either party is misinformed or deceived, the system malfunctions.

Our experience clearly indicates that few consumers have any idea of the cost of credit. This is particularly true in the case of the poor. They are unable to shop for credit because they have no basis for comparison. The proposed bill would give them this basis - it would enable them, first, to decide whether they can afford the cost of buying on time and second, provide a means of comparing the credit cost from the various available sources.

Such legislation already exists in several of our sister states. Recently, the Massachusetts Consumers' Council reported the lack of adverse effects on retail sales in that state in the face of the legislation.

In my opinion, one of the most important bills which I have recommended to the legislature this year relates to merchandise sold by door-to-door salesmen to consumers at their homes.

As one who has pioneered in the fight against frauds and deception in the marketplace, I can attest to the fact that high-pressure door-to-door selling by a fringe element of unscrupulous salesmen is one of the most troublesome areas in the consumer protection field today. It is particularly shocking to me that these promoters prey upon the poor and disadvantaged and upon those with language difficulties.

The bill provides a three-day cooling off period during which a buyer of merchandise from a door-to-door salesman may advise the seller that he wishes to cancel the contract entered into on his doorstep.

The feature of the bill will provide the buyer with an opportunity to consider the seller's proposal, examine the merchandise and discuss the sale with others in the family. The bill I have recommended contains no limitation on the dollar amount involved in the sale.

By allowing a 3-day cooling off period, the consumer is given a greater opportunity to make a final decision which may involve considerations of his ability to pay and consultation with attorneys or other sources of help.

The American economy has a place for the reputable door-to-door merchant. In fact, many large companies use this sales method exclusively often to the benefit of the consumer. By protecting the householder against the activity of the fraudulent high-pressure salesmen we will also be helping the legitimate businessman.

Another very important measure which I have recommended to the legislature involves the theory of a holder in due course. This legal precept provides that where an installment contract for instance has been assigned, the assignee has certain legal rights as a so-called holder in due course against the purchaser of the goods. All too often we have found however, that this so-called holder in due course may be a part and parcel of the merchant's business operation and his sole purpose is to get the consumer's name on the contract and immediately transfer it to a third party.

The bill I have recommended provides that the purchaser of goods or services shall have 45 days instead of the present ten days in which he may rescind a contract which has been transferred to a third party by the original vendor of the goods or services. Although there have been some recent decisions to the contrary, the courts have been reluctant to make the finance company responsible for the sins of the seller.

We cannot rely on the judicial process to solve this very difficult problem of properly allocating the risks of loss between buyer and assignee. The legislature must make the decision as to whether to continue to recognize the holder in due course status at all or to change the statutory conditions under which such status will be recognized.

Other areas of legislation I have proposed include a requirement that landlords pay interest to tenants on security deposits, the licensing of travel agents, television repairmen and home improvement contractors.

I am also supporting legislation that would license automobile repairmen. A measure which has been proposed by Governor Rockefeller.

Undoubtedly, the best protected consumer is the best informed consumer. Even the most diligent law enforcement program cannot do the job alone.

I have high hopes that our consumer education course will create a higher level of marketing sophistication among the students than is possessed by many of their parents today.

My office has carried on an extensive education program of its own. Staff members frequently address community groups on current consumer problems. We have developed a film which depicts common frauds and our consumer literature has been distributed throughout the State. This literature is also printed in Spanish as an aid to many of our citizens.

Substantial progress has been made in our never-ending fight for business decency in this State. We have received solid support in these efforts from business, labor and consumer groups. There can be no doubt that government, business and consumers must continue to work together to ensure the well-being of our free enterprise system for the benefit of all our citizens.

The Consumer and Congress

Hon. Richard L. Ottinger, Member of Congress

One of the most significant changes in the national scene over the past decade has been the rapid growth in Congressional concern -- and action -- for the consumer.

This is a radical departure from the past and one that must have a considerable impact not only on the quality of our life, but upon our economic and social structure as well.

Past Congressional action for the consumer was sporadic hesitant and circumscribed. The main thrust -- as represented by the pure food and drug laws, for example -- was to protect the public from products that had a demonstrable adverse effect upon health.

To the extent that there was any recognized need to protect the consumer from misrepresentation, fraud or exploitation, it was generally held that this was the responsibility of state and local government. But the main responsibility fell on the consumer himself. Little or nothing was done to disturb the ancient rule of caveat emptor, "let the buyer beware."

Quite recently we have seen a truly dramatic shift. A rash of new laws has been proposed, laws which are designed to protect the consumer, not only from physical dangers, but from being misled or exploited through ignorance. Many of you, who represent industry, have some reason to feel the pendulum is on its way to the opposite extreme, caveat vendor.

The driving force behind this changing national policy for the consumer has, unquestionably, been the type of consumer education which has been pioneered here by the Lincoln School and by David Schoenfeld and others. If the consumer is to make a rational choice in his own interest, he must be aware that there is a choice and he must have at his command the information and techniques with which to make that choice effectively.

Patently, this calls for a vast expansion of organized consumer education in schools, colleges and adult education programs. Equally obvious, I think, is the fact that this educational process is going to call for a high degree of cooperation between industry and government, at least government as it is represented by departments of education and school administrations.

But I think we have to face some facts about what can be achieved by education alone. Education can't help the consumer to make choices when the necessary information is unavailable or when there is, in fact, no real choice.

The Truth-in-Packaging legislation passed in 1966, the Truth-in-Lending bill which has been passed in this Congress, have been the most significant advances in the area of governmental efforts to provide information necessary for consumer choice. These bills and the Land Sales and Full Disclosure bill which is pending before the House Commerce Committee, on

which I serve, represent, in effect, a tribute to the effectiveness of the effort that has brought you all here today.

I am a strong believer in the free market as the best method of determining the price and the distribution of products. The underlying premise behind this legislation is that the consumer, if you give him all the relevant information, can exercise the most important function of the free marketplace: a choice. Other legislation such as the Welfare and Pension Plans Disclosure Act, my version of the Electric Reliability Act, the Federal Drug Compendium Act and a host of others do honor to this principle as well.

Whether there will need to be additional legislation in this area depends to a large extent upon the degree to which industry is aware of the powerful thrust of popular consumer feeling and exercises self-policing and self-direction.

The high-level representation from industry at this meeting is a very heartening indication. Much of the proposed legislation is good. Some of it may even be effective. But the fact is that legislation in and of itself does not provide the kind of effective interaction between consumer, manufacturer and marketer that will assure a strong, healthy and growing market from which shall derive greatest benefit.

I believe that in order to achieve this goal we must strike a balance between three factors: education, legislation, and private enterprise initiative.

Giving the consumer information will do him little good in those areas where he has no choice. Take, for example, the purchase of auto and health insurance, or electricity and gas. In these areas, the dynamics of the free marketplace have simply broken down or don't exist. The cause of the breakdown, in my opinion, is similar in each of these cases and thereby hangs a cautionary tale that should give both government and industry pause.

In each case, the failure of the industries involved to police their own actions forced governing bodies to impose regulations upon them and the result has not been fortunate. First, the consumer has largely been read out of the game. The regulators and the regulated have entered into a complex relationship that has little or not relationship to the purchaser or the market. On the other hand, those industries governed by blanket government regulation have simply not had the motivation to innovate, to strike out for new ground.

Not only do we have to find ways to read the consumer back into the picture in these areas, but also we have to be particularly watchful that we don't read him out of others with all the new "consumer protection legislation." If the Truth-in-Packaging law produces only a sterile dialogue between the regulator and the regulated, everybody loses.

Regulation is, in many cases, clearly necessary to protect the integrity of the market medium itself, as, for example, the SEC regulations preventing fraudulent prospectuses and requiring financial disclosure; but regulation is not a substitute for competition. It does not guarantee

that the consumer will be protected. Particularly in the highly regulated industries, a vexing problem has been the emergence of domination of regulators by the regulated industries themselves, with the consumer the forgotten man. Who is going to watch the guardians?

The answer has to be the consumer. In my opinion we, in the legislative branch, have to create a mechanism through which the consumer may inject himself back into the dialogue between industry and government, and make his presence felt with all the force of law. The consumer has to be assured that he will have reasonable choices and that he will have information on which he can make a choice in the marketplace. In turn, the educators must give to the consumer the knowledge to use these tools effectively.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. Automobile tires are a product with which we have all had experience in buying. Until recently, we as consumers had inadequate choice with respect to safety features that could be incorporated in tires and inadequate information on which to base a choice. A governmental agency empowered to set standards for tires and require accurate and standard information to be published about them will now soon be established, but only through the fortuitous presence and action of a one-man consumer agency, Ralph Nader. Mr. Nader has also recently demonstrated that the consumer is still inadequately protected by the auto safety agency with respect to the prices that will be charged by auto companies for new auto safety devices. Already, in this brand new agency, there has developed a comity between the regulator and the regulated that requires consumer protection action.

Frequently the only recourse of a really concerned consumer is legal action. However, as things stand today, it is often just too costly for the consumer to take such action. It reportedly cost private citizens several hundred thousand dollars to get a Federal court to require the FPC and Consolidated Edison Company of New York to give the public interest full consideration in the licensing of the controversial pumped storage hydroelectric plant at Cornwall-on-Hudson in the celebrated Storm King Mountain Case. The court decision made it abundantly clear that the citizens were right in their contention that the regulator and the regulated had both signally failed to consider public factors such as cost, damage to the fish life and the fishing industry -- and the desecration of thousands of acres of land through proposed routing of overhead power lines. But it cost individual consumers hundreds of thousands of dollars to obtain the protection that should have been afforded to them by the regulatory process.

The same experience is repeated in thousands of different situations- it cost property owners thousands of dollars to fight environmental and cost considerations in the location of Interstate Highway I-87 by the Bureau of Public Roads, to fight damage through jet noise problems at our major airports and to successfully fight the destruction of thousands of homes at incredible cost in construction of a District of Columbia freeway and Three-Sisters Bridge in Washington.

This kind of action is far beyond the capability of the consumer, who is, after all, an average citizen. He can't hire engineers, economists and other specialists and certainly can't afford protracted litigation.

I propose that there be created an agency with the responsibility for representing the consumer in all governmental actions that affect his interest -- a Consumer Protection Council that will have standing in proceedings of agencies and regulatory bodies and, even more, have standing to appeal decisions to the courts. This would be a body that would have access to the vast expertise that is available not only in the Federal Government, but in the private sector as well.

Now I can practically hear a collective groan -- not another Federal agency to add to the FPC, the FTC, the FAA, the FCC, the SEC, the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety and the host of others. If we have this abundance of agencies now and they aren't doing their jobs, what makes you think another agency will work?

Let me point out a couple of really vital differences. John Galbraith once noted that the real problem with these Federal regulatory bodies is that they rapidly become too identified with the industries they are supposed to regulate. The Consumer Protection Council would be an independent agency, responsible only to the Congress and the consumer. Unlike the other agencies, it would have no specific responsibility to a given industry.

Second, in spite of the normal irritation that many businessmen express over the complexities of the SEC procedures, everybody agrees that, in the main, it has done an effective job of protecting and enhancing a healthy free market in securities. No responsible businessman would willingly return to the jungle that existed before the SEC was created. Why has it been effective? Mostly because the people whose interests it was protecting, the securities purchasers and smaller companies, have had the resources to make full use of its capability to protect them. They have also had the information to make it work. This would be true for the Council, too.

The fortunate conditions under which the SEC operates has produced a lively dialogue between the regulator, the regulated and the consumer.

In other areas, however, because the consumer has so far lacked the voice that the proposed Council would give him, the dialogue has been noticeably one-sided and the result has sometimes been tragic. This is particularly so with respect to innovation. Our huge mass-production industry is reluctant to adopt changes that could be of great importance to the consumer and in regulated industries, the regulators don't show any penchant for action.

For example, the Federal Highway Agency has long had the responsibility for passing on the safety of materials and design for highways built with Federal funds. It has the capability to test and evaluate new products. Yet a protective device -- a new, safe median barrier that has been available for six years and that could save thousands of lives and millions of dollars of property damage -- has consistently been shunted aside and ignored because it would disturb the comfortable relationship between the Federal Highway Administration and the so-called highway lobby.

The median barrier, as you know, runs down the center of the highway and prevents cars from jumping into oncoming lanes. Most such barriers are unreliable and, even when they work, do a considerable amount of damage to the car and often throw the car back into the right-hand lane, endangering other traffic. The new barrier inverted by a man named Smith, sets the car back in its own lane smoothly and without damage or danger. I've tested it myself and it works. Yet for the past five years the Federal highway people have resolutely refused to even look at it. They prefer to go right on using the device that they have been using for nearly twenty years.

Clearly the consumer deserves better. And, I'm afraid, he won't get it until he has a way to make his voice heard, his opinion felt and his cause adequately financed. This is what a National Consumer Council would do for him.

Address

Betty Furness

I'm delighted to be at Lincoln High School, the pioneer in consumer education in this State.

And I am particularly happy that this first statewide conference was staged here in Westchester, my home county. Perhaps it will serve as an incentive to other states and they, too, will stage conferences on the all important subject of consumer education.

Most of you know, I think, that I was so impressed with the job of consumer education being done at Lincoln that I "borrowed" (and I put that in quotes) the initiator of that program, David Schoenfeld, to act as my Director of Consumer Education in Washington.

The job that Mr. Schoenfeld has done in building a program of consumer education in this school cannot be praised too highly. And I can only hope that schools in this State and the other forty-nine will realize the immediacy of the job to be done and incorporate consumer education in their curricula either on an elective or, as in the case of Illinois, on a mandatory basis.

The New York State Education Department must be congratulated for taking the lead in preparing materials for an elective course in consumer education as well as accepting it as part of the requirements for either the social studies or business education sequence.

I have given top priority in my office to consumer education and that is why I am so happy to have Dave Schoenfeld on the staff.

Whenever a new idea is pioneered there are critics. There are those who say: Is this necessary? We never had it before. Why do we need it now? And the subject of consumer education in schools is no exception.

There are skeptics, there are critics. There are those who say that consumer education should be given only to nonacademic students? Why? Isn't everyone a consumer? You are, I am, and every student in your classes is one. And that's regardless of age. The kid who buys a coke or a cone is a consumer just as much as his mother who buys a chicken or his father who buys a car.

Then there are those who ask: What is consumer education anyway? Let me sum it up for you. It is the preparation for the art of everyday living which enables an individual regardless of age or income to make intelligent choices based on knowledge and information. It's as simple as that. Not only do we need it now, but it is essential.

With the increase of technological expertise there are new products, new materials, new uses for things that were undreamed of just a few years ago. In order for the consumer to use the marketplace to his advantage he must know HOW to use it. You all know that salesmen in shops are the

vanishing Americans. In supermarkets, in discount houses, in variety stores, and even in some department stores, if you don't wait on yourself you don't get waited on. So, that of itself necessitates knowing more about what you are doing than it did a few years ago. You not only have to ask the questions, you darn well better know the right answers if you want to get your money's worth.

As we grow up we sometimes are not able to distinguish between needs and wants. And believe me there is a great big difference between the two. And the gap is measured in dollars and savings.

Good basic consumer education enables a person to establish priorities between the two. We may want the moon, but it is not a basic need. Perhaps we can have a piece of it if we shop wisely for our needs.

My office receives a constant flood of letters containing an infinite variety of consumer woes. Many of them say: "Maybe you can help others--if only I had had some information or knowledge." Most of their problems deal with referral schemes, home improvement swindles, credit, used cars, appliance and warranties. These people were never taught how to shop, how to read labels and warranties, or how to ask the proper questions. The result is an enormous loss to their pocketbooks.

I am hoping that consumer education,started at the elementary level, and continuing through secondary schools, and even college, will reduce the financial disasters caused by ignorance.

Among educators there are those who say consumer education should be incorporated into one discipline or another. I do not agree. For every discipline is affected in some manner.

A working knowledge of mathematics is needed to figure interest and percentage charges. And some mortgage transactions would baffle an Einstein. English is needed to understand that "other language," the language of many warranties, sales contracts and instructions. Other disciplines are equally related - Science, History, Economics, Business, Industrial Arts, Home Economics and all the others.

And what is more, the student in these various areas becomes interested because he is learning something that he can apply to everyday life. In an age where communication and identification are the watchwords, you as educators have the means right at hand. Virtually any consumer problem can be related to any subject area in your curricula, and enables the student to associate learning with his practical world. So I believe in consumer education from kindergarten to university and I know that Mr. Schoenfeld agrees with me. This is not to say that a separate course is not desirable as well.

Because to paraphrase Marshall McLuhan, in our civilization the "medium is the money" and it is never too early to teach a child just that..You can relate pennies to lollipops as well as dollars to deficits.

You see, things are changing. Production has always been the American dream. We were taught the how's and why's of production. And the ultimate

was to learn to earn.

But now with the growing complication of the marketplace, with its mind-reeling array of choices and products, it is essential that we learn how to use money. We have learned how to earn it. But we have not learned how to spend it. Because the schools saw no need for that. Now they are beginning and we can hope that we will have a rising generation of young people who will be able to spend the money they earn with more wisdom than their parents.

One side effect of this new type of education is that some of the kids claim that they can now better communicate with their parents. The questions of spending, saving and getting value (received) were points with which their parents could identify and the families are finding a level of communication.

Fathers have been heard to say, "Through my kids I'm becoming consumer educated and I find myself listening more closely to a sales spiel and not falling quite so fast."

One student enthralled his family with the mixed nuts experiment. He proved to them that in a package of mixed nuts 82 percent was peanuts and it was much more economical to make separate purchases of peanuts and other nuts. Another young man having learned something of his consumer rights in class went to a store to buy a suit at an advertised sale. One-half hour after the store opened he was told no more were available. He and his father stood on their rights and were sold a suit at the advertised price.

These are hopeful, heartening signs, and encouraging, too, is the growing interest in consumer affairs in adult education. I hope adult courses will be extended everywhere. The AEA is very concerned with this subject. There cannot be too much of this at any level. I believe in it and I know you must believe in it, or else you would not be here today.

There are myriads of ways the unwary consumer gets less than his money's worth. I won't use the word "gypped" because it is not always intended as a gyp. But believe me if the consumer were better informed the gyppers would have no chance at all.

Some educators plead that they already have Home Economic classes in the curriculum. That's just fine. But it isn't enough. To teach a girl to cook well and sew, without teaching her the value of what she is buying to cook with and sew on, doesn't go far enough. Far too often boys think of Home Economics as just something for the girls. And they are right because the boys have been left out of most thinking and planning and teaching. There is no reason why Budgeting, Money Management and just plain knowing how to buy and borrow can't be part of home economics classes. It exists in most of the "home ec" curricula -- let's now get it into all the classrooms -- not just some of them. Consumer Education knows no sex. But that doesn't mean it isn't interesting.

And it is an art, an art that requires the use of all five senses -- and sometimes a sixth, an art that requires that you use your head and

everything that's in it.

I'm not saying that even a consumer-educated person won't make mistakes. But his margin for error is slimmer than the innocent abroad in the marketplace who has never been taught what to look for and what to look out for. The educated consumer will stop to think before he acts.

One point must be kept firmly in mind; it is not the purpose of consumer education to make decisions for an individual. The purpose is to have the education valid and objective, so that the student exposed to all points of view is in a stronger position to make his own decisions.

We must teach the student to use his money wisely and to get the greatest value for it. But the responsibility is not all on the educators or on the consumers, the government has responsibility as well.

It must protect the consumer against unsafe products and misleading business practices.

You know that for almost a year now I have been devoting much of my time to consumer legislation. We have succeeded in getting some important measures passed.

As President Johnson stated in his Consumer Message of February 6, "In three years, we have taken historic steps to protect the consumer against:

--Impure and unwholesome meat.
--Death and destruction on our highways.
--Misleading labels and packages.
--Clothing and blankets that are fire-prone, rather than fireproof.
--Hazardous appliances and products around the house.
--Toys that endanger our children.
--Substandard clinical laboratories.
--Unsafe tires.

"In addition to these, the first session of this Congress took important steps toward passage of other consumer proposals we recommended last year, including the Truth-in-Lending, Fire Safety and Pipeline Safety bills which passed the Senate, and the fraudulent land sales, mutual funds and electric power reliability measures.

"This session of the Congress should complete action of these vitally needed proposals to protect the public. It has already begun to do so."

In passing a strong Truth-in-Lending Bill a few weeks ago, the House of Representatives brought every American consumer another step closer to knowing the cost of money he borrows. A conference committee is now considering this bill. This year, the President has proposed a new several-point program:

--He has asked for a crackdown on fraud and deception in sales.
--A major study of automobile insurance is proposed.
--Laws are sought to protect Americans against hazardous radiation from television sets and other electronic equipment.

--Legislation has been introduced which will close the gaps in our system of poultry inspection and to guard the consumer's health against unwholesome fish.
--He has moved to prevent death and accidents on our waterways.
--New meaning will be given to warranties and guarantees, and ways will be sought to improve repair work and servicing.
--A government lawyer to represent the consumer will be appointed.

But legislation is only one method of protecting the consumer. Another method is protection through education. But we need forceful experienced teachers. Unless we can develop some expertise in this area we will be unable to make much progress.

So I am very pleased that a course in consumer education for teachers will be given in the Graduate School of Education at Fordham University, beginning this September. This should be of value to teachers who would like to acquire some additional background in this field. The course at Fordham is a beginning. It needs to be expanded quickly to meet the growing demands of consumer education.

For consumer education to succeed, we must have teachers who are knowledgeable and interested in the field. We also need more materials of every type to assist the teachers and the students. The material should be current, practical, and easily related to the student group. Some producers and manufacturers are making material available to schools and a great deal of it is excellent, objective, and not self-servicing.

Just recently an educator, Dr. Albert DeMond, was assigned the responsibility of consumer education within the U. S. Office of Education. I believe he is in the audience. He will serve as a resource for consumer education and as a liaison with our office. So, things are underway.

Imagination and creativity are needed in the teaching of this relatively new subject. Students must be able to relate practically to the subject. And because values differ in varying strata of our society the subject does not fall into a neat slot.

But properly understood and dynamically taught, classes in consumer education can bring about a dialogue between teacher and students that does not come easily in other disciplines.

I urge all of you to remember that you are dealing with different attitudes and patterns of behavior. Middle-class students have home lives and family problems very different from students in deprived or ghetto areas. The values which are right for one group are not necessarily right for the other. So it is essential that the teacher keep his objectivity. Never should he impose his values, his choices, his decisions on his students. Rather he should see that the students are exposed to all views, making it clear that the application of acquired knowledge is an individual matter.

My office is interested in three phases of consumer education.

The first is the one discussed here today. Second is consumer education in both adult basic and continuing education. There are many

who have not prepared for their role as consumers because they never think of themselves as consumers. But I think, and I know Dave Schoenfeld agrees with me, that because we are all consumers we must be prepared to enact our role. That is why I believe consumer education at all levels to be of top priority.

The third phase of the program is not a separate phase but one that requires a slightly different approach. It deals with consumer education for the low income consumer. There are 32.7 million Americans at the low end of the income scale, the economically deprived.

It is in the urban and rural ghettos that frauds flourish. Deceptive sales practices are rife because far too often the consumers may not know how to read. They cannot understand the complicated language of contracts or what it is costing them to buy on credit. Often they pay more than consumers with larger incomes. Bait and switch tactics, fake contests, referral sales are all practices which gyp the poor. A little knowledge could save a lot of money. Knowledge, too, could enable the older citizen, the person living on a low fixed income to get more for his money, and to be less vulnerable to deception.

It is a fact of life that even if they do understand, they have no recourse, no other way to buy the things they need. So our responsibility is twofold. The government has the task of policing frauds and deceptive sales but you as educators have the task of being sure that these people are informed, that they get the best possible help in using their money, that they be on the alert through knowledge for the unscrupulous who seek to cheat them, and that they come to the marketplace on an equal basis with others in our society.

I am not asking for Utopia. Surely, it is not too far out to ask that every American be taught how to get the best value for his money by using the knowledge that is a necessity in this growing, complicated and magnificent marketplace of ours.

I think my office can help. The government is doing its part. I know that you will do yours.

Thank you.

Remarks

David Schoenfeld

I feel a bit strange speaking from this stage as an outsider after having done it so often as part of the regular school program. However, we are here today to talk about consumer education in a much broader context than that of Lincoln. We are faced with a marketplace as you've heard this morning which has undergone and is undergoing tremendous change. It is moving very rapidly, and the most sophisticated of consumers finds it exceedingly more difficult to make rational choices. There are many forces at work in this marketplace.

Back in 1861 John Wanamaker laid down some rules for his store which we can laugh at today, but they were standard then. The store must be opened at 6:00 a.m. and remain open until 9:00 p.m. the year around. The store must be swept, counters, base shelves, and showcases dusted, lamps trimmed and filled, the chimneys cleaned, pens made, doors and windows opened; a pail of water and a scuttle of coal must be brought in by each clerk before breakfast if there is time to do so, and attend to customers who call. The store must not be open on the Sabbath day unless absolutely necessary, and then only a few minutes. Any employee who is in the habit of smoking Spanish cigars, getting shaved at a barbershop, going to dances and other places of amusement will most surely give the employer a reason to be suspicious of his integrity and all-around honesty. Each employee must pay not less than $5.00 per year to the church, and must attend Sunday School each Sunday. Employees are given one evening a week for courting purposes and two if they go to prayer meetings regularly. After 14 hours of work in the store the leisure time must be spent in reading good literature.

We look on these as being quaint but some practices in the marketplace of much more recent vintage might be considered just as quaint. Consumer education is a necessity for all individuals in this marketplace. As Miss Furness and the others stated this morning, a good deal is going on in the area of consumer protection through legislation. However, it is equally important and perhaps much more effective in the long run, for the consumer to be protected through education. In fact, we might even say that consumer legislation is of limited use, if we do not have knowledgeable and informed consumers.

It's difficult to generalize when we talk about consumer education because consumer problems are individual and specific. There is no one approach or program that can provide all that is needed to a given situation. Consumers react on the basis of psychological and sociological factors, with little concern for economic factors. To put it simply, a good many consumers act in the marketplace without worrying how much money they have in their pockets. Their decisions are not necessarily logical in terms of cost or quality or taste.

Let me give an illustration: this past summer in Berkeley, California, I saw seven women shoppers, all from an extremely low-income area, blindfolded and asked to taste a variety of different brands of ginger ale. They were

national brands, regional brands, and store brands. Unanimously they selected the store brand, which happened to be the most economical as well. When the blindfolds were removed and they were informed of this, they were asked if they would buy this ginger ale if they were going to buy any ginger ale. Again, unanimously, they all said, "No, by no means." They didn't want to look cheap to their friends and relatives, or as one stated, "My husband would crown me if I brought this home." Here we are dealing with a pattern of behavior and attitude which concerns itself with status and prestige. It's difficult for us to say that this is wrong. In fact, I feel we shouldn't say it because if status is that important and they think it can be bought in a bottle, let them have it.

An interesting survey was recently completed by the Opinion Research Corporation of the adult public on all income levels. It's based on some 2,000 home interviews and this is the result: 7 out of 10 Americans think that present Federal legislation is inadequate to protect health and safety; 55% believe that more laws are needed to help consumers get full value for their money, 34% would like additional Congressional investigation of packaging and labeling of grocery products, and 62% favor a law requiring doctors to prescribe drugs by generic rather than brand names. This is an indication of a growing concern on the part of the general public as to their consumer problems. I think we should bear in mind that consumer education should be established across the board. So we must not overlook the adult population outside the formal school setting.

Consumer education is finally beginning to move on a broad front. A great many people in industry recognize the need for educated consumers. In fact, the Chairman of the NAM marketing committee has stated: "Every available evidence indicates that consumerism isn't going to go away after the election is over. It is routed in deep feelings." NAM has a consumer information program called TIPS. The Chamber of Commerce and BBB are also involved. Most trade associations are quite active as well.

With regard to academic developments -- New York, as we all well know, has taken the lead in providing materials for an elective course. There seems to be considerable activity in schools as a result. The State of Illinois has amended its school code to require consumer education from the 8th through the 12th grades. A curriculum committee is currently at work preparing materials for a separate course as well as units for incorporation into existing subjects. In New Jersey the State Commission on Consumer Protection is exploring ways and means of introducing consumer education into the schools. In Rhode Island a bill similar to the Illinois legislation is being considered and at the same time the State Education Department there along with interested people are holding exploratory discussions on consumer education.

A similar preliminary dialogue is being held in Massachusetts. There seems to be developing a ground swell of activity.

On the local level, the City of Norfolk, Virginia, has a comprehensive program at both elementary and secondary levels incorporating closed circuit TV series on it. The City of Memphis, Tennessee, has just embarked on a massive program on the secondary level. It is a project that is being carried on by the local school board, the School of Education at Memphis

State University, and some assistance from the University of Oklahoma, which has done a great deal of work in the field of family finance. There are a number of others that I can cite, but I think you recognize that a trend is developing.

In order for consumer education to develop properly it must have the appropriate tools, and the two prime requirements are teachers and materials. As Miss Furness said this morning, Fordham University is embarking on a program of preparing teachers for consumer education. You might know that this course will be offered at 4:30 on Wednesday afternoons on the Bronx campus of the University.

Another source for preparation will be the new College for Human Development at Penn State University which will have four major divisions. One of these will be the consumer. It will encompass much more than teacher preparation, but this will be an integral part.

In the area of materials, our office has been in contact with the American Library Association and the Yonkers Public Library. Through the coordinated effort of all three, with most of the work being contributed by the Yonkers Public Library, we are hoping to prepare a comprehensive annotated bibliography of resource materials for use in consumer education. In fact, I'd like to request that any of you who have some information that should be incorporated into this listing, to forward it to me. Our hope is to achieve a listing that will indicate age and ability levels, plus the specific topics covered. It will include audiovisual materials as well.

Now let's get down to specifics of consumer education. I've seen all types of consumer education programs -- programs which range from a babysitting operation to a most vital, meaningful discussion of consumer interests. The one ingredient that makes the difference between the two extremes is the ability of the teacher to make the discussion practical, to make every individual in the classroom aware of the importance of this knowledge to his own everyday living. There is no textbook in this field, including my own, which can serve as much more than a reference tool, because events change so rapidly that there is no one piece of material that can be the final word. The basic tools in the classroom remain the newspaper, the magazine, radio, television, government publications, and ultimately the actual students' and teachers' experiences and those of their friends and relatives.

To reinforce further the usefulness of this material, community resources should be employed extensively. For every topic under discussion, whether it be in a separate course or in an integrated approach, authorities working in the particular field should be brought into the classroom to impart their knowledge and information for the benefit of the students and also the teacher. Consumer education is not the easiest subject to teach. No one person can know it all. But if individual specialists, representing a variety of viewpoints are brought in, a reservoir of information can be developed and greater understanding achieved. These resource people bring the subject to life and update the classroom discussion.

For example, in a discussion of credit, there is nothing as effective

as bringing in individuals who deal with credit every day of their working lives. I'm talking about bankers, credit union people, small loan company officials, and even loan sharks. The teacher can say it 10 times over, but the individual coming into the school from the outside world makes it stick.

One day in my classroom, a credit official from a local bank came in with a sheaf of $100 bills. Waving them in the air in front of the class, he asked if they would like to borrow $100 apiece. All the hands flew up. He promptly put the money in his pocket and pulled out loan applications, which he asked them to complete. Then they got to the second or third lines they threw their pens down in disgust and said they couldn't complete the form. At this point the banker said, "Fine. Now you've learned the first problem of getting credit and we can proceed to talk on a practical level." By this very simple technique he had them interested, involved, and wanting to know more about the topic.

When discussing advertising, there is no substitute for turning on the television set in the classroom and having students look at commercials and begin to analyze advertising from a point that they are familiar with. An essential part of consumer education is developing a relationship with the student to the point that he is eager and receptive to the learning process. There is no substitute for ingenuity in teaching, and this applies to any subject area. However, in many ways, the possibilities are unlimited in consumer education, because we are operating in the marketplace constantly. Of course, all of this must be tied into the marketplace because in the end the marketplace is the workshop of consumer education. Just as you bring in community people to the classroom, students should be encouraged to go out into the marketplace to see what is going on, and to tie the classroom situation into actual experiences outside of the academic world.

Since consumer education is so broad it might be advisable for schools to give first consideration to its introduction through existing courses in the curriculum. Not only would this be the least jarring approach to the school, but it would also make particular use of the talents of the staff.

There is no one who can teach interest rates and credit costs better than a math teacher.

There is no one more qualified than the English teacher to teach the language element of advertising. There is no one who can talk more knowledgeably about foods than the home economist. A discussion of drugs and cosmetics -- their uses and misuses -- is best when approached by the science instructor. And so it goes. Consumer education is basically an interdisciplinary subject which must avail itself of many talents and skills in order for it to accomplish its purpose -- the purpose basically being the creation of an awareness and an alertness in the individual consumer when he enters the marketplace for any activity, whether it be to buy, borrow, or save.

The interdisciplinary approach has advantages, but it also has disadvantages. I mean that it represents a hit or miss tactic in the part of the individual teachers and their students may not see the whole picture. It requires coordination to avoid duplication and to fit the pieces together

to achieve a solid foundation of understanding. The separate course in consumer education can overcome these disadvantages. And if consumer interest units are introduced in the various disciplines, reinforcement of these learnings can be achieved, giving the broad overview as well as the specifics.

The teaching of consumer education should be focused on the establishment of knowledge and information that can be applied by the individual to any given situation, whether it be the purchase of a can of peas or an automobile. Another consideration with might have some merit is the possibility of introducing the team-teaching approach to consumer education. Recognizing the broad scope of consumer education, it might be practical for teachers with specific knowledge to be brought in to lead the activities in a given area. For example, the driver education teacher can talk about cars. The home economics teacher can talk about the marketing system.

In essence, consumer education is an area whose development is limited only by the imagination, creativity, and degree of commitment of the individuals involved in a specific school or community. The techniques employed must be geared to the needs of the individual group and the instructors, their ability, interest, and age levels. Finally, if there is anything at all that our office can do to assist you in your efforts to develop or expand consumer education, you have only to call on us for full cooperation.

Thank you.

Comments of Panel Members

Hillis K. Idleman - State Education Department - Moderator

Prof. Thomas Briggs of Columbia University drummed into the heads of school administrators: "The job of the school is to teach pupils to do better the desirable things they are going to do anyway." Surely among the desirable things they are going to do is to expend their money. Our job then is to help them to use their resources to bring maximum value and satisfaction.

It is my feeling, although not necessarily that of other members of the Department, that all pupils should have the opportunity to elect consumer education. Even those pupils who have studied the more analytic and theoretic economics will find pleasure and profit from a welltaught course in money management. It is true that some aspects of consumer education are presently taught - and properly so - in other subject areas. I would hope that each of these subject areas would continue to supplement and reinforce consumer learnings.

However, the vast majority of schools are still following a separate subject curriculum in which there is little relationship between subjects in a given field or between the larger areas of social studies, language arts, science and home economics. It is inevitable that large gaps in consumer education should exist when it is taught in such sporadic and compartmentalized fashion.

An even greater gap exists between the theoretic principles which make up so much of our traditional educational experience and practical daily experiences. Yet in increasing voice the plea is heard to relate education to the realities of the pupil's daily life - to help him find answers to the real problems he faces. And high among these is the problem of achieving maximum value and satisfaction from his disposable income.

The plan followed here at Lincoln High School seems to offer the richest hope that all pupils who so desire may emerge from high school well equipped to make wise monetary decisions. Through the newspaper in the English class, through school assemblies when advertisers and consumers discuss issues frankly, through practical experiences in the business department, through the home planning of the home economics department, through the chemistry of foods and cosmetics in the science department, through an understanding of the marketplace in economics, and through other disciplines a background of consumer consciousness, experience, and knowledge is built.

Serving as the capstone is the course in consumer education which now enlists one-third of the student body - including many who are taking the college preparatory course. One has only to consider that many college graduates are high on the "sucker list" to know that an academic education alone is no guarantee of effectiveness in the marketplaces. But such a well rounded experience as this school and other schools teaching consumer education offer will indeed help students, "To do better one of the desirable things they are going to do anyway."

Comments of Panel Members

Herbert Bothamley - Chief, Bureau of Continuing Education
Curriculum Development, State Education Department

The Bureau of Continuing Education Curriculum Development shares the concern for more consumer education for the adult population. One of the Bureau's extensive projects involves the development of materials in consumer education for the programs offered throughout the State in basic education. Consultants to the Bureau early realized the tremendous need for establishing programs that would provide for immediate learning situations rather than waiting for long periods of time during which reading skills would be developed. One of the four major areas in the basic education program is consumer education.

The materials here referred to are designed as packets of materials containing flipcharts, filmstrips, teacher's manuals, and recording disks. The recording disk has been designed as a followup for the class lessons in that the disk may be taken home by the student and played in a family setting.

This emphasizes one of our chief beliefs; namely, that much of good consumer education can be home oriented, because the nature of the content crosses through all levels of family structure. It would, therefore, seem highly desirable for school districts undertaking the development of consumer education materials to work out materials that can be used by the entire family. The unique nature of the concepts in consumer education provides for an excellent opportunity in having the family learn as a unit.

Knowing how to plan family expenditures should be a vital understanding appreciated by all members of the family. Such understandings as knowing how to budget, how to shop, how to get credit, how to provide for insurance of life and property are all essential in develping a family curriculum. Knowing how to get the most for your money can provide a tremendous personal satisfaction.

Motivation for learning about good consumer education is built into the very nature of the subject. Nothing is of more personal satisfaction than the use of wise consumer practices. Probably no other subject matter provides the vast working laboratory that is found in consumer education. The principal core of the learnings involved in consumer education center around the "marketplace." It would follow then that a good curriculum should have reasonably heavy emphasis upon field trips. Well organized field trips for adults can provide some of the most meaningful and enriched experiences that the disadvantaged adult can ever experience.

I urge all those concerned with the development of curriculum for consumer education seriously to ponder the best ways of developing materials that can be used through the family setting—the parents and youngsters learning together in order to establish a mutually beneficial goal.

It has long been accepted, and I think somewhat falsely, that the youth and the adult must learn in separate situations. Perhaps this is true in terms of some subjects, but I know of no other field than consumer education in which the stage is so well set in terms of mutual motivation, learning experiences, and personal realizations. A breakthrough can be made in developing effective programs in consumer education through the family environment of learning. Our Bureau recognizes the need for continuous stress on consumer education.

Comments of Panel Members

Laura Ehman, Chief, Bureau of Home Economics Education,
State Education Department

The Contribution of Home Economics Education in Implementing the Teaching of Consumer Education

The well versed speakers this morning and Mr. Schoenfeld this afternoon have left no doubts in our minds that one of the most important emerging subjects for the secondary curriculum is consumer education. Ever since Mr. Lefkowitz called upon the schools to intensify their efforts to help young people become alert and well informed consumers, home economics educators have been where the action is.

The very title of our subject area, home economics, implies that home economics is uniquely able to accept some responsibility in the field of consumer education.

What contributions are home economics educators making toward educating for better consumership?

State Level Involvement

At the State level we are identifying concepts of consumer education related to home economics instruction. These concepts will be available to serve as a guide for local planning of the contribution home economics can make to a school consumer education program. After the identification of concepts, suggested behavioral goals toward which home economics teachers might teach secondary students will be added.

Local Action

Learnings in consumer education seem to permeate all areas of home economics content; namely, Personal, Family and Social Relationships; Home Management; Family Economics; Clothing and Textiles; Family and Community Health and Safety; Child Care and Development; Food and Nutrition; and Housing, Equipment, and Furnishings. Each home economics course in the State program for grades 7 through 12 contains learnings which focus on some aspects of consumer education. Home economics teachers have become more conscious of this phase. They are giving pertinent attention to this area of their teaching.

In addition to classroom teaching, home economics teachers are making consumer education available to students in a variety of ways. For example - in one high school, the home economics program includes short courses in various subjects for boys and girls not enrolled in home economics for credit, but who want and need answers to some of the concerns they face. One such course is called Spending Money Wisely. The content is flexible and geared to the needs of those in the group. The main emphasis is on assisting young people to spend well the money they have today and thus to formulate concepts that may guide them in whatever the future holds.

A number of home economics departments in the State have cooperated with the New York State Commerce Department in presenting a Teen-Age Consumer Assembly Program. In a large urban area the program was held in one high school and presented over closed circuit television to other schools in the city. These assemblies have been most successful. One reason for the success was that local personalities in government and industry participated in both planning and conducting the program.

Since the distribution of the Consumer Education materials we, in the Bureau of Home Economics Education, have had requests for help in team teaching. Home Economics teachers tell us that they are working with Business Education teachers and/or Social Studies and/or Mathematics teachers in developing an integrated program of consumer education.

In one school after reviewing the backgrounds of all staff members available, it seemed desirable that primary responsibility for a consumer education course be placed with two teachers - one from business education and the other from home economics. A course outline was cooperatively developed and each teacher was responsible for those units for which he was best prepared. As a result, each had instructional responsibility for approximately one-half of the course. As a general rule, one teacher took the leadership of the class while the other assisted with the preparation of materials, counseled on group and individual projects and participated in leading class discussions. Evaluation of student achievement was shared.

In another school it was not administratively feasible to assign two teachers to one class. In this school there were two sections of a consumer education course scheduled with two different teachers - a social studies teacher and a home economics education teacher. The teachers arranged their units so that they could alternate between the class groups. Both classes could meet in one group for certain presentations by resource people or for the sharing of films.

Some adaptations are being made in the State Consumer Education materials. For example, in one school there is a unit included for girls only on feminine finance. This is taught by the home economics teacher. Concepts of present and future responsibilities of young women as they relate to money are developed under intriguing titles based on sound principles of consumer economics, titles such as When You Manage Money, When You Need To Economize, When Ads Overwhelm You, What's In a Name, When You Shop From a Catalog, Women at Work, The Men in Your Life, When You Use Consumer Credit, and When the Consumer Needs Protection.

Future Homemakers of America

Future Homemakers of America projects emphasize consumer education. Future Homemakers of America is the home economics education youth organization which functions in junior and/or senior high schools. One of the nine national projects in the Future Homemakers of America program of work is entitled "Make Your Money Behave." The purpose of this project is "to help youth understand and practice selective spending by emphasizing money management, money's use and credit, money's value and its place as a

resource, and the decisions related to money handling." Among the chapter experiences that have been carried out in relation to this project are:

- One chapter sponsored a school assembly program entitled "The Teenager: A Consumer Force."

- Another chapter had chapter parents present a program at a chapter meeting on "Managing the Family's Money." The parents explained the purpose and use of a family budget and factors that determine how a family spends its money.

- Still another chapter conducted a teenage shopper's survey to determine whether teenage buyers read labels, what guidelines govern their purchases, whether they are impulse shoppers, if they do comparison buying, whether they readily accept a substitute if their intended purchase is not available.

Future Homemakers of America was one of the eight national youth organizations invited to participate in a meeting in Washington a few years ago, at which time youth answered the question: "How Do Teenagers See Themselves as Consumers?"

Inservice Training of Teachers

We, in the Bureau of Home Economics Education, continuously ask our home economics teachers - how up-to-date is your consumer information? How many of you have taken a course of study in consumer education since you received your college degree?

Each summer many home economics teachers participate in family finance workshops. Last fall a sizable number of New York State home economics leaders participated in a National workshop sponsored by the American Home Economics Association during which consideration was given to the pressing issues of consumer credit today and ways home economics can expand its contribution to family well-being through teaching, research and counseling in the use of consumer credit. New York State colleges which prepare home economics teachers have not only strengthened their preservice consumer education courses but have increased summer and off-campus offerings related to consumer education. Records show that home economics teachers are updating themselves.

As home economics educators, we have an academic background diverse enough to enable us to appreciate the breadth of the whole area of consumer education. Although we may not have all the answers, we do have a speaking acquaintanceship with most of the disciplines that contribute something to the answers. We home economics educators share the concern for consumer education with other educators, with parents, with business, industry, and with other citizens.

Comments of Panel Members

Mrs. Betty Larsen - Assistant, Bureau of Social Studies Education, State Education Department

Consumer education is gaining acceptance increasingly in New York State schools as a 12th grade elective course for the general student. This is a plus for our side because it is this student who is most often neglected in curriculum development.

However, the college bound student has proven himself to be in as much need of such education as his less academically inclined peers. The financial expert, Sylvia Porter, in a recent column describes her chagrin over her own college freshman daughter's utter failure to balance her checkbook which resulted in an overdraft on her first checking account. Mrs. Porter found it difficult to accept that although she had thought she had carefully prepared her daughter for this first venture in financial independence she ran a cropper.

Also, it seems rather patronizing to assume that the less affluent and/or less capable student is most apt to experience the need for careful consumer preparation. The credit-card-carrying middle class, if features in periodical literature are any indication, seeks financial counseling constantly.

To implement the consumer education program locally, basic decisions have to be made after careful considerations. I think there is no single best plan among those that are well thought out. If the locally developed approach is based on the best staff deployment and objectives relevant to the needs of the student group, it should be successful.

If such determination results in a team approach, there should be someone on the team with the responsibility to coordinate the effort. Needless to say this should be someone with an abiding commitment to the merits of the program.

I see much legitimacy in assigning this role to the social studies teacher on the team. Realistically the base for the total program is economic and economics is one of the social studies.

Also the findings of the social sciences, psychology and sociology, contribute to the consumers' education.

If the team approach is not adopted locally, I think, following the same reasoning above, that consumer education could be offered as a social studies elective. Another reason for offering it as a social studies elective is that in this broad framework I think you would attract more students than if it were considered a business or home economics subject. This is taking advantage of the fact that all students are oriented to a fact of academic life - everybody takes social studies.

Here, too, though as an elective taught by a social studies teacher, the approach MUST be interdisciplinary.

The next step for the social studies teacher is to identify those areas in the proposed curriculum which are legitimately the concern of the social studies - for example, the history of consumer protection by the government, the structure of government that provides the necessary legislation for consumer protection, the sociological implications of multimedia persuasion and the psychological approaches to advertising and, of course, consumer economics and the history of our market economy.

After identifying these areas the teacher is ready to plan cooperatively how to educate the consumer.

Comments of Panel Members

Arthur A. Natella - Principal, Lincoln High School

As an administrator who has been on the ground floor in this matter of consumer education, I feel qualified to say to those who are about to embark upon similar programs, that the key ingredient for success is the presence of interest on the part of both the administration and one or more teachers, in offering boys and girls something they need and want, and that is consumer education. One hears from time to time the age-old argument that it's so hard to introduce consumer education into a school's program because there is no room for it. Another frequent argument advanced is the traditional charge that it is hard enough to meet college entrance requirements as it is. At Lincoln High School it has been done, and we think quite successfully; therefore, the success can be duplicated anywhere in the country if conditions are right.

Since consumer education is a new field, we recognize that it is almost impossible to come across teachers who have taken courses in subject matter and methodology in that particular area. Such courses do not exist, and maybe that's good! As an old friend, who served for many years as a superintendent of schools, once said, "Good teaching seems to vary inversely with the number of methods courses taken." What you need is a good personality, a sincere conviction that what you are doing is right and an enthusiasm for opening the eyes of young people to their duties and responsibilities as consumers.

Comments of Panel Members

John E. Whitcraft, Director - Division of Occupational Education, State Education Department

Some Educational Implications in Teaching Consumer Education

Up to this point, in this first regional conference on consumer education, it has been an inspiring experience for me to listen to our distinguished speakers talk on the need for more and better consumer education. They have already very clearly and eloquently made a strong case for a new approach to consumer education in our schools.

Anything that I might add now will seem somewhat repetitious, but the success of an advertising campaign for a good new product is repetition, so let me emphasize again a few things that I think you might wish to consider in deciding how you might make available to future citizens, who are now in high school, some much needed consumer education.

Peter Davis, who wrote about consumer boycotts, said, and I quote:

> The American consumer, after all, is coddled, beseeched, market-tested, motivationally researched, nationally sampled, wheedled, and badgered into parting with as much money as he can get his hands on--and sometimes more. Consuming is a wild party at which everyone is invited to stuff himself and drink himself under the table, and the hangover is delivered by the postman at the end of the month.
>
> But there are no laws, as yet, governing the type and amount of consuming the consumer must do. As a matter of chilling fact, he does not even have to come to the party. If the price isn't right, or if he doesn't like the seller, the American citizen--redefined as consumer--can just not buy. And so: the consumer boycott.

I'm sure that most of us will agree that practically every present and future citizen could benefit from more consumer education. How, then, can we implement a plan to offer consumer education in our secondary schools? I'd like to express a personal point of view for whatever it may be worth.

If we can agree that consumer education should be planned and taught on an interdisciplinary basis, and I firmly believe this is the best approach, then in my opinion, this might be handled administratively in this manner.

Given a senior high school of about 2000 students in grades 10 through 12, we'd like all students to have the opportunity to elect at least a one-semester, one-half unit course in Consumer Education. I repeat, we'd like to have them have the opportunity to elect the course, if they want it, and if they can fit it into their schedule.

But we have to be realistic in our thinking and planning. If we want to make this new course a 12th year senior elective, as suggested in the New York State Curriculum Guide, then we are thinking of a group of about

600 seniors in a school of this size. Of this number, about 60 percent will likely be taking a subject-crowded college preparatory program, and 40 percent will be taking a general course or a vocational course. Now, the 40 percent, or approximately 240 students, will be looking forward to going to work, or possibly marriage, upon high school graduation. These 240 students certainly can benefit from an elective course in consumer education before they graduate.

If we consider scheduling 10 classes of 24 students each during the school year, that would be five classes each semester with 24 in each class.

Now, if we are smart, we'll schedule these five classes all during the same period, in five neighboring classrooms, in one section of the building. To be more specific, let's say we schedule this new course the seventh period, as an example. Administratively, we now have a scheduling plan that lends itself to team planning, to team teaching, to large group and to small group instruction, and to an efficient use of community resource persons.

All that is now needed is to find five teachers on the staff who are interested in and willing to teach one period a day of consumer education. And, in any school of this size, this should not be a difficult problem.

Who, on the faculty, could teach a one-period course in consumer education with considerable success? I'd propose a teacher of home economics, one of business education, a distributive education teacher, an agriculture teacher, an industrial arts teacher, or, possibly, a teacher of auto mechanics, cosmetology, health services, science, driver training, physical education, English, social studies, or mathematics. There are undoubtedly other teachers on the staff who could teach this new course.

There would be no problems that I can see as to teacher certification, because a teacher may teach one period a day outside of his or her special field.

The five teachers could easily trade sections and classrooms so as to teach those instructional units that they are best prepared to teach. A little careful planning of the scope and sequence of the course and each of the five classes would have the advantage of having each of the five teachers for about one month out of the one semester or one-half year but, I wish to point out, it need not necessarily be four consecutive weeks.

Now, wouldn't you like to go back to high school again and have a chance to elect a course in consumer education, taught by five different interested and inspiring teachers, plus about ten additional resource people drawn from the community? This could very well become one of the most interesting and valuable courses in the school's total offerings.

Now, let's consider what can be done to match a one-semester, half-unit course, so as to fill out a full-year schedule. For these students, if they have not already taken a typewriting course, I would suggest a one-half-unit course in Personal Typewriting or a one-half-unit course in Introductory Typewriting. I can't think of two more valuable courses for a future

citizen, who wants to be an intelligent consumer, than a one-semester course in Personal Typewriting and a one-semester course in Consumer Education.

This new elective course in Consumer Education can be used to meet graduation requirements as an elective in Group III for a State Regents or local diploma; or, if the student happens to be a business student, or is majoring in Home Economics or Agriculture, this new course can be used as a substitute in a major sequence in Group II, providing the teacher in one of these fields is involved in the planning and teaching of the course.

It really is going to be relatively easy to implement this new course in your secondary school program. I recommend it to you as a "best buy" in education for a great many of your students. I hope that you will be able to add it to your school program this coming September, if you are not already offering it.

Group Session A

Social Studies

Mrs. Betty Larsen, assistant in the Bureau of Social Studies Education, explained the purpose of the meeting, introduced the panel members, and acted as moderator.

Robert Dunne, social studies teacher in Columbia High School, East Greenbush, discussed his work in teaching consumer education. It is introduced in the Problems of Democracy course. There are not sufficient staff members for a team approach at this time. Introducing the topic of the consumer into Problems of Democracy has tended to overcome the fear of some students who would have terminated their social studies in the 11th grade to continue on to the 12th. Likewise it has tended to overcome the stereotype of consumer economics as that of making budgets, a study of the market, etc. The class began with a study of propaganda and its application to advertising.

John Holmes, social studies teacher at Hudson Falls High School, mentioned the helpful materials available from the State Council on Economic Education. He is presently teaching consumer education as the 4th semester of the two year program in American History. He noted that one of the easiest ways to introduce the better students to advanced economics is to give them a unit on consumer education. He uses the consumer approach with his non-Regents classes as well.

He commented on the excellence of the State syllabus on consumer education and noted that he actually teaches from it. Direct reference was made to the syllabus at this point.

Mr. Holmes makes use of local community developments such as the interest in a sales tax within Washington County. He does not feel the need to stay with the day's lesson plan if something in the daily paper lends itself to student interest. He noted that even though teaching the course takes time to track down materials it is a great deal of fun. He follows the students' interests as to the content to be covered; and he stated that, "The students are in love with the course."

J. Woodrow Sayre of the New York State Council on Economic Education noted that the State Council was started by Commissioner Allen. He announced a summer workshop in Consumer Education offered by Cornell University at Nassau Community College with 6 hours of credit. He noted that 12 teachers are working under his direction on developing supplementary materials in consumer education with a group of 12 laymen as an advisory committee. Mention was made that there are now 510 teachers offering economic courses in the State and 55 now offering a course in consumer education.

In the question and answer period the issue was raised of the needs of junior high age students for consumer education. One teacher in New York City noted that he was now teaching such a course to 8th grade students of low ability. Another teacher recalled the teaching of consumer economics in the 9th grade in the past.

Mrs. Larsen pointed out that in this afternoon's discussion it had been assumed that this new course is a social studies course, but this is not necessarily true in other school systems. The group felt nevertheless that many administrators were assigning the responsibility for consumer education to their particular discipline. It was also noted that the new course does not necessarily need to be restricted to the 12th grade. Mr. Holmes noted consumer education is being offered to Track C students in the 9th grade. There seemed to be considerable concern on the part of some teachers about the grade placement of this course.

Most of the teachers present indicated that they were teaching or planned to teach consumer education. About half the teachers thought the course should be a team-teaching project.

Considerable emphasis was given to the point that the social studies department has a place for the new consumer education course.

Respectfully submitted,

Florence Gabauer,

Recorder

Group Session B

Business Education

John E. Whitcraft, Chairman - Director, Division of Occupational Education, State Education Department

Mr. Whitcraft expressed pleasure at the interest shown by business educators in this new course in Consumer Education. He mentioned that business educators have been offering courses in consumer education for the past 30 years under a variety of different subject titles. Now that a new course of study has been developed by the State Education Department, he stated that business educators should seriously consider the possibility of working with other educators in developing an interdisciplinary type of course that could be developed by team planning and taught by team teaching.

He introduced the four speakers on the panel. Their comments follow:

Leon Levy, Coordinator, Consumer Education Program and Acting Assistant Director of Business and Distributive Education, New York City Public Schools

The City of New York wanted to start a consumer education program in the city beginning September 1967. The question of integrating such a program in the city schools arose in the spring of 1967. New York City contacted the State Education Department and requested a syllabus for consumer education and was told that, although the State was working on one, it would not be ready by September of 1967. New York City then decided to develop its own course of study.

Interested people in education, industry, government, and consumer organizations were contacted. A committee was brought together, an advisory council of these people from the different interested organizations was formed, and New York City proceeded to develop its own course of study. This course of study is strictly experimental in nature, similar to the State syllabus. The New York City and the State syllabus are combined and both are used in the consumer education program in the New York City schools.

Letters were written to all District Superintendents recommending implementation of consumer education in the city schools. Each superintendent received a copy of the proposed course of study, and a short note explaining why it was felt that it was necessary to introduce the course in the schools. The District Superintendents were asked for an opinion of the schools in their district which they would recommend to receive a syllabus. Replies from the District Superintendents to these letters indicated that some were interested and some were not. The new course guide was sent to the school principals recommended by the District Superintendent. The high school principals made the decision whether or not to offer the course in the individual high schools. Eight or nine high schools decided to adopt and try this particular course of study. At the present time twelve high schools are offering the course; some even have six classes this semester.

It was decided to try offering the course in the elementary schools--from kindergarten through eighth grade, so a special course of study was written along with lesson plans and suggested scope. This elementary school course has been more widely received than the high school course because it's much easier to fit into the daily program. In the elementary grades, we have approximately 80 schools which are teaching various topics of consumer education from this new experimental syllabus. There are now over 100 schools offering consumer education in New York City, and we are picking up more schools each day.

Mr. Levy then briefly gave some of the areas covered in the syllabus; the consumer in relation to the economy; the consumer in relation to the marketplace; how to buy; topics on housing; various problems that exist in the city relating to welfare; credit; and laws relating to the consumer.

Both the high school and State syllabuses have been very well received in New York City--both receiving excellent reviews. Everyone seems to be interested in the new course. The major problem found to date seems to be how to fit it into the school program. The best way seems to be to have students elect to take it at any grade level from ninth to twelfth grades. We are recommending the ninth and tenth grades. At the present time in 12 or 13 schools, some students are taking it at the senior level, some at the tenth grade, and some at the eleventh grade.

Present thinking is that New York City would like to integrate consumer education into all subject areas. The curriculum bureau is now in the midst of proposing a series of guidelines listing consumer education concepts to be integrated and taught with every subject area.

Sister Mary Christopher - Professor, Business Education, Elizabeth Seton College, Yonkers

In the last century, the great writer, John Henry Newman, wrote in his essay on the *Idea of the University*, that the various disciplines represented in the universities should be likened to a king in Parliament, or a Prime Minister in Parliament, with each department defending and representing its own discipline and fighting for it if needs be. But he did feel that, just by attending a university and knowing what various departments were doing, students would be educated and be able to understand and appreciate what other subject matter areas had to offer to the whole field of education.

I shall present the way in which this program could be implemented in private and parochial schools where the majority of students are academically oriented in a college preparatory program. Very often people think that this consumer education program is just for the general student, the student who is not college bound. What I would like to try to show you today is that this program can be geared to the lowest student as well as to the highest student, because if you notice, the State syllabus describes the course as being diversified and flexible. It requires a dedicated and committed teacher, and there is the real challenge. You business teachers won't have any trouble, because you have a built-in interest in the subject matter of this course, if my observations are correct.

I would like to begin by telling you the story of a faculty meeting in our college that happened a year ago. Our college had been trying to implement the program and coordinate the various disciplines so that we could try to relate for the students what each one of us was trying to teach, whether it be a liberal arts program, a retailing program, a history course, or a merchandising course; trying to teach the general values and these principles so that students will see some meaning--some connection between these various studies. We discussed this at the faculty meeting. At the meeting a young philosophy professor raised his hand and said, "I understand how to coordinate and correlate my philosophy course to the liberal arts girls, and the junior dramatic classes, but I really can't relate it to business education, particularly to the retail and distributive education girls." He said, "I don't see any connection." Immediately I raised my hand. The first thing I thought of was the utilitarian philosophy of the last century. I just mentioned a few philosophers like John Stuart Mills, and others to show him that many of the merchandising students were familiar with the principles of philosophy, so that it shouldn't be too hard for the various students to follow.

Reference was then made to the use of the *New York Times* magazine section indicating how it is possible to correlate philosophy with advertising, art, science, marketing, so that philosophy students and merchandising students could see the relationship between these various disciplines. It was pointed out that many examples can be found where the effort by business to protect the consumer had its origin in the fields of philosophy, logic, ethics, and religion.

The field of behavioral sciences had a relationship to consumer education. The field of social studies, including sociology, social psychology, and economics, has a relationship that can be brought out through skillful teaching. There are many aspects of English that relate to consumer education. The same is true of mathematics. It is a simple matter to show the relationship of art--in packaging, in display, in retailing, and in advertising.

Sister Mary Christopher concluded that it isn't difficult to correlate consumer education with an academic program as generally offered in the private and parochial schools so that these students can have the benefits of a broad general education with integrated learnings about consumer education in nearly all the academic disciplines.

Fabian Englander, Coordinator, Distributive Education Programs, Nyack High Schook, Nyack

I shall attempt to show how business educators can draw upon all of the various disciplines in the small upstate high school to develop a practical course in consumer education.

The mathematics department has much to contribute through the general mathematics course. Problems dealing with interest, credit, taxes, are all related to consumer education. The English department can make a contribution by having students make research studies on consumer problems and then prepare written reports. Many readings in English classes can be on subjects

dealing with consumer education. Social Studies has many possibilities for bringing out the economic concepts, particularly in relation to economic theory.

In 12-C you have the analytical problems course where consumer education can be taught. Academic students in 12-A and 12-B can learn much about consumer education by studying the many problems of our democracy.

In home economics there are many learnings which we can draw upon if we invite the home economics teachers to contribute in selected units dealing with foods, nutrition, clothing, and the like.

You do need a coordinator in a small high school to bring all these resource people in to make an interdisciplinary approach to consumer education. But it is possible to do this. One very good resource person in the community is the county extension home economics person. She is excellent because of her broad knowledge of consumer economics and problems of the typical consumer.

The agricultural department can make a contribution by its special competence relating to food production and distribution. The price of foods is related to the economic principles of supply and demand and farm subsidies also play a role in maintaining and setting prices consumers must pay. The industrial arts teachers have much to offer, particularly in relation to automobile purchases and maintenance, home furnishings and home repairs.

These are some of the things that can be done in a smaller school system. I don't say it is being done, but it can be done. It will require careful planning and coordination, but the possibilities for an enriched course in consumer education are there if you make the effort.

I have prepared some charts showing how this can be done. If you care to have one, I shall place them here on the stage and you can help yourself to one. If you have any questions and you care to write to me, I shall be glad to try to assist you in developing an enriched course in consumer education.

Gustave Mueller, Professor, Business Education, State University of New York at Albany

Before I tell you what I think should be done to prepare teachers to teach this new course in Consumer Education, I'd like to point out what I believe to be an excellent sequence for business students. This would be for them to first take Consumer Education to be followed by the new one-semester course in Economics. At the campus school at State University where I teach, we have a full-year course in Economics. It is not an easy course, but it has much of value relating to consumer education.

Business teachers have been teaching a great deal of consumer education over the years. Much of the material in this new State course of study came directly from the field of business education.

For the new teachers who are to teach this new course effectively, we need to expand the preparation of business teachers to include sociology, psychology, anthropology, economics, and several other disciplines. The older experienced teachers can prepare themselves to teach this new course through summer workshops and institutes, such as those sponsored by Cornell University and State University of New York at Albany.

There are four component parts to the system of developing good teachers: the college or university level, the State Education Department coming into the picture, public and private agencies, and the do-it-yourself level. I don't believe that outstanding teachers like David Schoenfeld can be ground out of the colleges and universities as they exist today. His is an artistic ability coupled with the ability to motivate and inspire students.

There is much in existing college and university methods courses that could be criticized. I shall give you one or two examples. Summer workshops are excellent types of methodology because they are related directly to teaching consumer education. These workshops can be very valuable in helping teachers to prepare themselves to teach consumer education.

The University can make a contribution. Professor J. Woodrow Sayre is presently developing a series of twelve units to supplement the new State syllabus. One unit has already been prepared. Professor Sayre also has a commitment to carry on research studies dealing with consumer education. There is a real need for research. In the Albany area, for example, I have discovered that there is a serious need for research dealing with people who are economically disadvantaged. We need more background information about these people, how they live, how they spend their money for food, housing, interest, credit, and the like. We can't be effective in helping these people until we have more facts on how they actually spend their limited income.

The *Christian Science Monitor* has an interesting editorial that points out that there are many areas that need special investigation because of their direct relation to the consumer. Some of these are automobile insurance, pleasure boat safety standards, television set hazards, warranties on consumer products, full disclosure of interest rates, truth-in-lending and in advertising, and several other areas.

In closing, let me say that I believe that those business teachers who would like to teach consumer education should familiarize themselves with the new State syllabus and begin teaching. Helpful assistance will be provided so that they can teach effectively.

Questions from the Floor

Following the panel presentations, Mr. Whitcraft, Chairman, stated that he would be willing to entertain one or two questions from the floor. The following question was asked:

> How does the new course in Consumer Education fit into a Group II major sequence?

The Chairman, Mr. Whitcraft, answered the question in this way:

"We heard this morning that the Social Studies teachers are willing to accept this elective one-half-unit course as part of a major sequence in Social Studies.

"It is my understanding that the Bureaus of Business and Distributive Education, Home Economics, and Agriculture will also accept this new course as part of a major sequence provided the teachers in these fields have been involved in the planning and/or teaching of the course. For more information, it is suggested that inquiries be directed to the Chiefs of the separate bureaus as to the specific ways in which this new course can be used as part of a Group II major sequence."

At this point, Dr. Albert L. DeMond, Consumer Education Specialist, U. S. Office of Education, asked for the floor to make a brief statement about the need for teachers to prepare themselves adequately in order that they can teach consumer education effectively. He pointed out that there are many new developments--new laws and regulations, etc.,--that would make it desirable for teachers to take summer courses or attend workshops so that they can update their knowledges in this area. He emphasized this by citing his personal experience where he found it necessary to go back to college twice in the last decade to update his knowledge in this broad field of consumer education before he could teach courses in consumer education with any degree of effectiveness.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Joan M. Foucault
Recorder

Group Session C

Home Economics

Laura Ehman, Chairman - Chief, Bureau of Home Economics Education, State Education Department

Consultants: Miss Suzanne Matson, Assistant Professor, Consumer Education, Cornell University
Miss Rita Marie Schneider, Editorial Director; Editor, Equipment and the House of What's New in Home Economics
Miss Anna Wartluft, Home Economics Teacher, Eastchester Senior High School, Eastchester, New York

Participants: Approximately 100 persons attended. The audience was made up of home economics teachers, supervisors, teacher educators; home economists in business and extension; school administrators; lay persons.

Meeting Highlights:

Presentations were made by each of the consultants representing home economists in education, extension and business. Each speaker explained her interest in consumer education and related some of her current activities. Assistance to teachers in terms of material and human resources and college courses and inservice workshops was identified. Special emphasis was given to the need for home economics teachers to continually help students, their parents and the community understand the purposes of consumer education and the contribution home economics is making in this important aspect of education.

Audience discussion focused on the following:

- identification of additional sources of help to teachers in teaching various aspects of consumer education
- comparison of the past role of home economics teachers in teaching consumer education and the present trend toward team planning and team teaching
- reaction to a statement made by Miss Betty Furness which showed limited understanding of the scope of the current home economics education program
- review of the purposes and content of the curriculum publication in consumer education
- need for including a representative from business among the featured speakers in any future consumer education conferences.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Rita Drumm
Recorder

Group Session D

Health, Mathematics, Science, English, and Other Secondary Areas

Arthur Natella, Chairman - Principal, Lincoln High School, Yonkers, New York

Group D session was composed of teachers of health, mathematics, science, English, and other secondary areas. A lively discussion ensued among the twenty persons who were in attendance. Considerable interest was shown by teachers on the junior high school level. About a quarter of the time was spent discussing what areas of consumer education might properly filter down to the junior high school grades. Some thought was also given of how to adapt the course to areas heavily populated by underprivileged pupils. Several teachers of mathematics inquired whether having a separate consumer mathematics course would adequately meet the purposes of consumer education. It was the feeling of the group that we should be very careful not to establish competing courses of study where exactly the same materials would be stressed.

Melvin Mendelsohn, Associate in the Bureau of Mathematics, State Education Department made the following points:

> At grade 7 and 8 the direction of the content of courses at these levels has been away from the consumer mathematics aspect. The rationale for this is that students must develop their basic computational skills, mathematical understandings, and problem-solving approaches. The only area where consumer education problems are treated, in small doses, is the problem-solving area.
>
> As with grades 7 and 8, the ninth grade non-Regents mathematics courses focus on the same skills, concepts and problem-solving techniques. Again, the current thinking is to develop good mathematical understandings and leave the consumer education aspect to the higher grades and/or the suggested consumer education course at the twelfth grade level.

Miss Mary Gill, Consumer Specialist from the New York office of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Food and Drug Administration, distributed an FDA supplement for the State course in Consumer Education, bringing the FDA references for that publication up-to-date. Copies of this supplement may be obtained from her office, Room 700, 850 3rd Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. It was also noted that consumers may secure help in the New York area:

> Dial (212) 788-3350 for New FDA Consumer-Phone Recorded Message
> Dial (212) 788-3354 for a message in Spanish

Considerable discussion concerned the matter of evaluative devices for consumer education; what kinds of tests to administer, how does one know that he is meeting his objectives, etc. The reply to this inquiry was the

emphatic statement that consumer education does not lend itself to objective tests, true and false tests or the fill-in type of response as readily as it does to the essay type of answer. Consumer education should develop thinking power and the ability to reason. Rote memorization of facts has little or no part in consumer education.

Toward the end of the session, a number of the participants were enthusiastically trading comments and experiences in the areas of frauds and deceptions.

Group Session E
Continuing Education

Mr. Herbert Bothamley, Chief of the Bureau of Continuing Education Curriculum Development, explained the general purpose of the meeting, introduced the other members of the panel, and gave an overview of the topics to be covered.

Mr. Joseph Mangano, Supervisor in the Bureau of Basic Continuing Education, emphasized that undereducated adults have an immediate need for consumer education information. They cannot wait until they develop their reading skills before the complex concepts involved in consumer education are presented. A packet of materials has been developed for persons with less than 3d grade schooling and include a sound filmstrip, a flipchart, worksheets, and a recording disk. A teacher's manual on how to teach adults the basic social living skills is available as well as manuals on the use of the filmstrip and flipchart.

The filmstrip was presented to the group. It was noted that the filmstrip is supplied with either a record or a tape. The vocabulary and ideas were carefully selected for persons with minimal education. It was pointed out that if the vocabulary was inappropriate to a specific group the instructor could easily make his own tape that would meet the standards of his class.

It was demonstrated that the flipchart could be used to present specific ideas or as a review for the lesson. Student worksheets are available to reinforce the main points of the lesson. They come in two groups--for the nonreaders and the readers. Recording disks are available for home use by the student so that he might review the lesson and also share with other members of the family the points discussed.

Mr. Herbert Safran, Associate in the Bureau of Continuing Education Curriculum Development, explained the method used to develop the curriculum materials. The first step is to bring together a committee of knowledgeable people on the subject who suggest a content outline and guidelines. A writer or a team of writers is secured who develop the outline into a useable guide. Then the material is reviewed by people in the field who might suggest changes that would improve its usefulness and finally it is printed and distributed.

The group indicated that the materials were well developed and filled a need in the area of basic education. Both Mr. Mangano and Mr. Safran answered a question that was raised relative to the method of selecting the committee and the procedure of verifying the accuracy of the content of the materials. Other questions were related to methods of securing the packet of materials.

Mr. Nelson Maurer, Associate in the Bureau of Continuing Education Curriculum Development, indicated that in the area of vocational education consumer courses are available and include: Money Management and Banks, Investments, Estate Planning, Law Everyone Should Know, and Life Insurance which is in the developmental stage.

Many courses in vocational education emphasize the development of marketable skills and a part of any such course could include the selection of tools, equipment, and materials. The Bureau of Trade and Technical Education has developed related lesson outlines for the vocational cooperative program and topics appropriate for an adult class include: insurance, personal income, credit buying and credit rating, contracts, and income tax reporting. With the increase in home ownership a course in home mechanics would prove to be popular. It was indicated that consumer education has a place in vocational education and should be a part of courses for: Manpower, On-the-Job Training, Apprentice Training, Trade Upgrading, Business and Distributive Education, and Home Economics.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nelson Maurer
Recorder